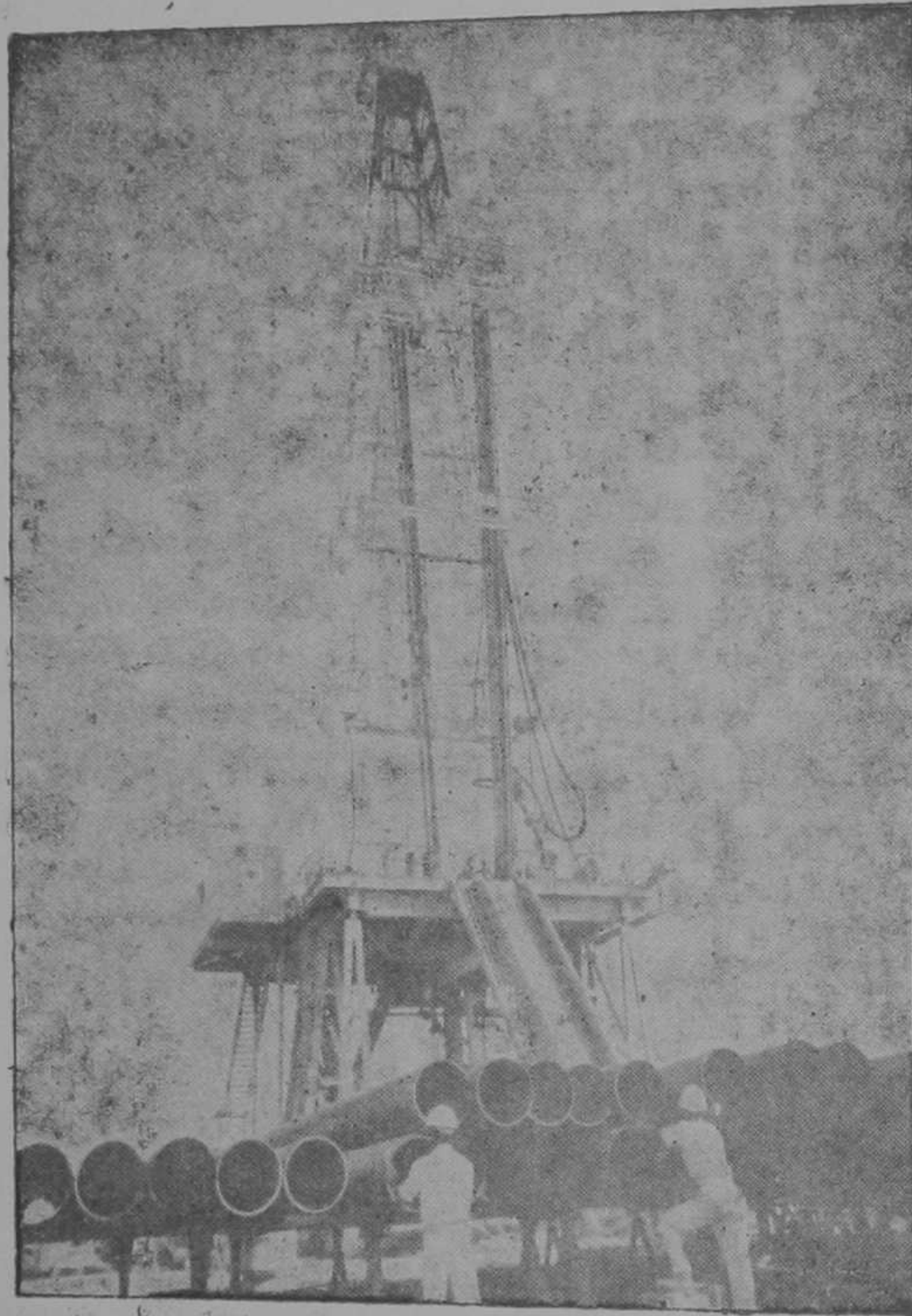


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EDITOR : K. S. MAHADEVAN

Our Great Leader T. V. Ramanujam

It is with infinite sorrow that we record here the death of Padmasri T. V. Ramanujam, for many years a distinguished President of Sri Shanmukhananda Fine Arts & Sangeetha Sabha, Bombay, and one of the chief architects of its prestigious auditorium, the Shanmukhananda Hall, at Bombay on 3rd October in his 80th year. His was a life of achievement.

After taking his Honours Degree in Economics from the Madras University, Mr. Ramanujam taught at the Vivekananda College, Madras and later at the St. Thomas College, Trichur in Kerala. He then migrated to Bombay and was financial editor of the Press Bulletin until he took up the post of Public Relations Officer of the Maharashtra State Transport Corporation, of which Seth Vadibhai Lallubhai Mehta was the Chairman. After two years, he joined the firm of Messrs. C. Doctor & Co. as General Manager and remained there till his retirement in 1986 due to ill-health.

His magnetic personality, gifts of persuasion and oratory, a flair for public work, drew the attention of many a cultural and social organisation of Matunga, of which the Shanmukhananda Sabha was the largest and the most prestigious. He was for many years its chief architect. But he was the first among equals like the late R. S. Mani, T. V. Doraiswamy, M. G. Iyer, the late B. Narayanaswamy and others, each one of whom played their roles to perfection. However their combined and incessant efforts were crowned with success on 22nd August

1963 when the new hall was inaugurated by Smt. Vijayalakshmi Pandit, the then Governor of Maharashtra—a crowning achievement for him personally, a great asset to the community and a symbol of national integration.

Prof. Ramanujam's wise leadership of the Sabha through subsequent years made it a great cultural force. Both the Central and State Governments extended unstinted support to it. He was the first South Indian to be made the Sheriff of Bombay.

Sri Ramanujam's good offices were available to the Bombay Tamil Sangam, the Subramanya Samaj, Chembur and other institutions which sought his wise counsel. In November 1983, his 76th birthday was celebrated on a large scale, when all cultural institutions joined in paying tributes to his signal services to art and culture.

'TVR' as he was known to his friends and admirers, was a man of charming manners and unfailing courtesy. He was accessible to all, and ready to help any good cause. The Central Government conferred 'Padma Sri' on him. In Madras the Krishna Gana Sabha and the Tamil Isai Manram had honoured him. Artists from all over India paid their homage to him in appreciation of his unique contribution to art.

His was thus a multi-faceted personality exerting its beneficent influence on the Sabha over a period of about 36 years. TVR is gone but whence comes another like him?

THE EDITOR

Shanmukhananda Hall's Silver Jubilee

All roads led to that Hall of international fame, SHANMUKHANANDA, on August 22, 1988, when it turned 25. Biggest in Asia, with a seating capacity of 3000 this air-conditioned auditorium wore a festive look befitting the commencement of the year-long celebrations that Sri Shanmukhananda Fine Arts & Sangeetha Sabha has chalked out. The hall was packed to capacity. The Silver Jubilee fete was off to a solemn start with the Governor of Maharashtra, Shri Brahmananda Reddy, lighting the traditional lamp.

"Music was a great unifying force to promote national integration," the Governor observed. His brief speech referred to the Hall as a cultural landmark in this great metropolitan city, and applauded the Sabha's uninterrupted service (for 37 years) to the cause of the fine arts. He also appreciated the proposed Hospital project that the Sabha has undertaken in the Silver Jubilee year.

As he put it;

"In spite of the diverse influences, in spite of the variety

that is India in terms of language, caste, creed, dress and traditions, more than any factor it is our common cultural heritage that has sustained the unity of India. Music is a vital part of this cultural heritage; in fact, in the traditional culture of India music envelops the entire life of the people. It is indeed the expression of mind and heart in terms of beauty and it elevates the human beings to noble heights. Apart from this universal appeal, music is a great unifying force and it can no doubt be used with advantage for promoting national integration. In this context, the efforts of the Sabha in promoting music are highly laudable."

In his Welcome speech, the President of the Sabha, Dr. V. Subramanian, paid tributes to the stalwarts who built the Sabha as well as this "monument of national integration". Among those who toiled for the organisation right from its inception. Professor T.V. Ramanujam (who could not

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attend on account of ill health), Messrs. T. V. Doraiswamy, S.M.Y. Sastry, S. R. Kasturi and S. Seshadri were honoured.

Like the hall, the celebrations are also massive in scale and memorable in quality. Scheduled for the Silver Jubilee Year are a rich cultural fete of classical music, dance, drama, Harikatha by top class performing artistes, besides

a symposia on music and dance. Added attractions are exhibitions such as "Sabha Down Memory Lane" (a photo feature), "Music on Stamps" and of Musical instruments. All these multipointed programmes are available to members for just the normal monthly subscriptions (except the drama series)—quite a rich fare for those who have stood by the Sabha through thick and thin.



"SHANMUKHANANDA HALL"

(b)

Sandhya Tandava

BY

DR. SULOCHANA RAJENDRAN

Amid the sylvan settings of the Himalayas at dusk, the dance of the Lord breathes beauty, peace and bliss.

"*Durjadi Nadinchine Pradosha Samayamuna...*" flows the *kriti* in *raga Gauri*. The blend of *sangita* and *sahitya* is total. The composer, Pallavi Duraiswami Iyer (1782-1816) could not have chosen a better *raga* to essay his vision of Lord Siva's "Sandhya Tandava" at the snowclad Mount Kailas propitiating His consort Gauri as *Trijagaj janani*, the mother of the three worlds. Depicting a rare spectacle and a rarer pose of Siva, the composition is an extraordinary gem that exudes rays serene on the Lord's dance characteristics.

The composer was no mere visionary. As much an eloquent artiste-painter as he was a musical genius, he captured in pleasing colours and cameos what he created in musical compositions. The spectacle in this *kriti* describes what has been enshrined in the *Siva Pradosha Stotrashtakam*.

केलाशशैलभुवने त्रिजगजनित्रीं गौरीं

निवेश्य कनकाचितरत्नपीठे ।

नृत्यं विधातुमभिवाञ्छति शूलपाणौ देवाः

प्रदोषसमये नु भजन्ति सर्वे ॥

वाग्देवी धृतवल्लकी शतमुखो वेणुं दधत् पद्मज-

स्तालोन्निद्रकरो रमा भगवती गेयप्रयोगान्विता ।

विष्णुः सान्द्रमृदङ्गवादनपटुर्देवाः समन्तात् स्थिताः

सेवन्ते तमनु प्रदोषसमये देवं मृडानीपतिम् ॥

गन्धर्व-यक्ष-पतंगोरग-सिद्ध-साध्य

विद्याधरा-ऽमरवराप्सरसां गणांश्च ।

येऽन्ये त्रिलोकनिलयाः सहभूतवर्गाः

प्राप्ते प्रदोषसमये हरपार्श्वसंस्थाः ॥

The Celestial Ensemble

Seating Gauri on a bejewelled throne, the *Sulapani* (Siva) dances in Kailas to the divine accompaniment of goddess Saraswati on the *vina*, Indira on the flute, Brahma on the symbols, and Vishnu on the *mridanga* with Lakshmi singing. This delighted all those who had come from the three worlds "to witness the celestial dance and hear the music of the divine choir during the twilight"

Duraiswami Iyer captures the spectacle with poetic splendour. "As the moon rises gradually spreading his glowing brilliance and as the sound of *Om* reverberates all around, much to the delight of all those assembled — the *devas*, *kinkaras*, the humans — the Lord dances this divine stance at the snow-clad peaks, accompanied by the celestial choir, exuding a serene calm. Even the serpent around His neck is in a gay mood"

The dance is almost a culmination of the "Neelakantha" episode, in praise of the Mother who is ever agile to protect Her

children; whose timely intervention in stopping the poison at the Lord's throat saved the whole universe from destruction. The Sulapani sounded the *damaru* for one *jamam* (three hours), which is called the *Pradosha Kala*. The dance is meant "to remove the sins..., dispelling the darkness of *maya* (illusion), burning *karma* and stamping down evil"

Seven Powerful Poses

Also known as *Gauri Tandava*, *Pradosha Natanam*, *Malaikoothu* (Tamil), meaning twilight dance, or *Raksha Tandava* the *Sandhya Tandava* is attributed to *Sthiti* (preservation), one of the five activities Siva's seven *tandavas* are said to represent.

The *Saiva Agmas* enumerate the seven *tandavas* as: (1) *Kalika Tandava* representing *Srishti* (creation); (2) *Gauri* and (3) *Sandhya Tandavas* for the two phases of *sthithi* (preservation)—protecting to remain in bliss, or preventing from falling into evils; (4) *Samhara Tandava* for *Samhara* (destruction); (5) *Tripura Tandava* for *tirobhava* (illusion, veiling, embodiment); (6) *Urdhva Tandava* for *anugraha* (release from bondage, or salvation) and (7) *Ananda Tandava*, collectively representing all the five activities of the deities, Brahma, Vishnu, Rudra, Maheswara and Sadasiva. (The last three are none other than Siva Himself.)

Dance of Bliss

The *Sandhya* dance casts a contemplative spell all around. Full of praise for the consort, the Lord dances with a divine poise, "calling the followers to worship Him with peace in their hearts." The *Pradosha stotram* defines it. And the

sylvan settings of the Himalayas at dusk only add to the beauty, charm and tranquility. Rightly has it been called the "Inba Natanam," or the dance of bliss.

To quote Enakshi Bhavnani who has published a detailed work on classical dance: "At the feet there are no worldly ambitions, sorrow or argument; no fear nor destruction; no pride nor mockery; only peace and the beauty of contemplation. The mind of man drinks deep of the essence of *yogic* self-forgetfulness and is cleansed and purified not by force or destruction, but by the renunciation of the ego."

A Sad Neglect

Although associated with the most important activity of the Supreme Being, i.e. protection, the fact remains that *Sandhya Tandava* has not drawn as much attention of the saints, poets, sculptors, and historians as it deserves. Obviously no conclusive research has been done on the subject. Nevertheless, its significance is no less than that of *Urdhva* and *Ananda tandavas*, which highlight respectively the superiority of the male to the humbling of the female and the blissful joy of the all encompassing Lord. The whole perspective of *Pradosha Natanam*, the *Pradosha Puja Vidhi* and the benefits and bliss which accrue from it reveal its charm and magnificence.

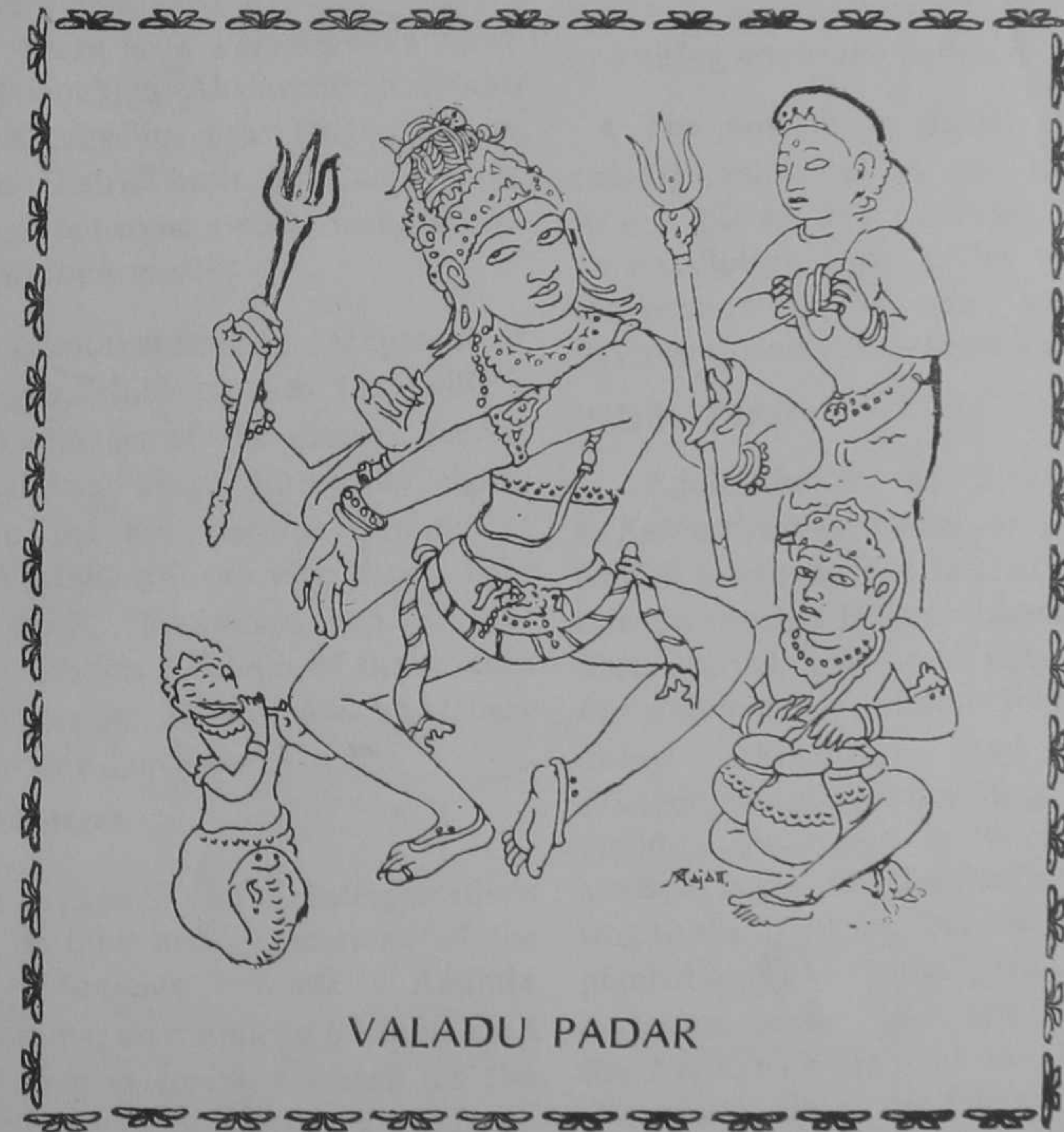
Various Versions

From the few scattered material available from literature, temple carvings, sculptures and icon (bronze), one could still construct the *Sandhya* dance postures and its characteristics.

In the Kailasanatha Temple at Kanchipuram there is a large sculpture of Siva in the *Sandhya Tandava*, "poised and yogic in character, with its gentle rhythm, harmoniously set at glorious eventide."

Paranjoti Munigal in his 'Tiruvilaiyadal Puranam' (great sports) speaks of the "Kalmariyadiya Padalam" (change of padam) which the Lord performed in

As the *Thandava murti* in this dance is depicted to be gentle, graceful and with poise, his foot-postures differ from the usual vibrant *Ananda Tandava* stance. The feet are rested either on a 'pitha' or on a lotus base. In the typical *Sandhya Tandava* sketch drawn by the eminent artist-musician, S. Rajam (Vide wrapper), the *murti's* right foot (with knee bent on the side) is slanted



VALADU PADAR

missed the "Sulapani" mentioned in the *Pradosha stotra*. With the two hands one already in *abhaya hasta* assuring protection and the other *Gajahasta* pointing to salvation, the Lord must have had another pair, to wield "sulam", the other probably with *damaru* reverberating Om.

stretched in a position is the Keezhvelur Valadupadar.

Murti with Many Hands

The sources reveal that the Lord danced with four, eight and ten hands. In the four-armed *murti*, two are the usual

children; whose timely intervention in stopping the poison at the Lord's throat saved the whole universe from destruction. The Sulapani sounded the *damaru* for one *jamam* (three hours), which is called the *Pradosha Kala*. The dance is meant "to remove the sins . . . dispelling the darkness of *maya* (illusion), burning *karma* and stamping down evil"

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Paranjoti Munigal in his 'Tiruvilaiyadal Puranam' (great sports) speaks of the "Kalmariyadiya Padalam" (change of foot dance) which the Lord performed in Kailasa and Velliambalam (Silver Hall) a Madurai. There is a *Valadupadar murti* (right foot icon) in Akshayalinga Swamy Temple at Keezhvelur, near Nagapattinam, in Tanjavur District built by Chola kings, which brings out some peculiar characteristics of *Sandhya murti*.

There is another icon at Tiruppattur of Pandyan fame, which typifies the twilight dance. The images of the dances carved by the Chalukyan kings during the eighth century in the Mallikarjuna Temple at Pattadakal (Maharashtra) also throw light on the *tandava*. In addition the sculptures in the cave temples of Ellora of the seventh or eighth centuries, though deformed, bear evidence to this dance.

Tandava Postures

There have been various interpretations about the postures and expressions of the *Sandhya Tandava murti*. Ananda Coomaraswamy, an authority on Indian art who has done extensive research in the dance of Siva, ascribes only two hands to the *Tandava murti*. He perhaps has missed the "Sulapani" mentioned in the *Pradosha stotra*. With the two hands one already in *abhaya hasta* assuring protection and the other *Gajahasta* pointing to salvation, the Lord must have had another pair, to wield "sulam", the other probably with *damaru* reverberating Om.

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The posture is similar in the eighth century sculpture at the Kailasa Cave temple (Cave 21) at Ellora. In another cave sculpture from Ellora we learn that the posture is the other way round, the left rested and the right on toes.

Valadu Padar

Again, the fact that Siva is referred to as *Kalmariyadiya Padar* or *Valadu Padar* (lifting the right foot instead of the usual left) proves that He also danced with right foot crossed over the left in *Swastika kunchitam* as in Mount Kailas, *Velliambalam* (Madurai) and *Keezhvelur* (Tanjavur). One interesting feature that could be discovered in the sculpture and sketches is that the *Gajahasta* is not pointing to the lifted leg, but to the right leg planted on the "pitha", with the left in *kunchita* while the left hand is in *Gajahasta*, with the right in *abhayamudra*. Conversely, where the left foot is planted and right in *kunchita* the right hand is stretched in *Gajahasta*. The only exception is the *Keezhvelur Valadupadar*.

Murti with Many Hands

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abhaya and *Gaja hastas* while the other two had *damaru* on the right and snake on the left. The *damaru* is held slightly away from the ear. There is no 'fire' in the hand. The Lord is flanked by Gauri on His left and Nandi on His right. Sometimes Vishnu replaces Gauri. The celestial orchestral ensemble is depicted, too. Artist Rajam describes this dance to have taken place at Tirupattur and observes that *Raga Naattakuranji*, or *Naattai*, and *Simhanandana tala* are associated with it.

The bronze image of the four-armed dancer at Kooram (Kanchi) has the *hastamudras* mentioned above. Even the foot postures go with the *karanas*, the left leg lifted a little. But the right foot resting on a human figure is intriguing; there is *sulam* (trident) in both the rear hands!

In the Ellora cave temple, the hands are so disfigured that it is difficult even to hazard a guess. But the snake is over the body and the skull dangles between the legs. Almost a similar sculpture has been found in a Siva temple at Tiruchchengattankudi in Tanjavur district.

The *Sandhyāmurti* depicted to have danced at Mount Kailas and Velliambalam (Madurai) is eightarmed. Again one finds two versions in the description of the articles held in the hands. The sketch of a sculpture from Ellora (Fig.2) depicts the *murti* with four right hands—one holding an axe, the other *damaru*, the third *abhaya hasta* and the fourth the front in *Gaja hasta*, while it is difficult to construe what the left four hold.

In the other version of eight hands Siva has *Pasa* (rope), *trisulam* (trident), peacock feather and *damaru* on the right hands, *Gaja hasta*, fire, snake, etc. on the left hands. And associated with this *murti*, says the artiste, are *Raga Navroz* and *Tala Lakshmeesa*.

A sculpture of Siva in the *Dasavatara* caves at Ellora (7th Century) which is dancing with eight hands on a lotus *pitha* is said to be "so dynamic that it looks as if the whole body is in motion", the lower garment loose and flying although the *jataimakuta* remains intact.

The Keezhvelur Icon

It is only at Keezhvelur that the *murti* with ten hands is to be found. Known as *Valadupadar*, the Lord dances with the right foot crossed over the left in *Swastika kunchitam*. Legend has it that Siva, pleased with sage Agastya going over to Keezhvelur on His command, asked him to wish any boon, to which the sage begged for "the *darsan* of the right foot in the Lord's *tandava*." Bound by His word, the Lord instantly planted His left foot and lifted the right and danced, states the *Sthalapurana*.

There have been quite a few deviations from the characteristics associated with the *Sandhya Tandava*. First the *Valadupadar*'s left foot rests not on a 'pitha' but on *Muyalaka* (ego-torn figure) and *jata* is not neatly tied but strands left to fly as in the *Anandava Tandava*. And it is these flying locks and not the hands that hold *damaru* and *agni* which touch the "Tiruvasi" encircling the *murti*. Secondly, the Lord dancing inside Tiruvasi is not referred to anywhere in *Pradosha Natanam*.

Dawn and Dusk Worship

Whatever the variations in interpretations of the *tandava*, one thing is certain—that *Pradosha puja* at dusk is as significant and religiously observed in Siva temples as *Arudra Darsan* at dawn. The "Koilpuranam", published by the Tiruvavaduturai Adheenam says "Of the five *sabhas* (halls) where the Lord of Cosmic Dance is enshrined in Chidambaram, the one in Raja Sabaa, in the 1,000 pillared hall (*Ayirakal mantapam*), has the *abhishekam* during the Tamil months of *Margazhi* (Dec/Jan) and *Ani* (June/July). The *abhishekams* are done at dawn and dusk respectively to the same Nataraja *murti*."

Pradosha Mahima

व्रतः प्रदोषे शिव एक एव

पूज्योऽथ नाऽन्ये हरिपदनयाद्याः ।

तस्मिन् महेशे विधिनेज्यमाने

सर्वे प्रसीदन्ति सुराधिनाथाः ॥

There is no doubt about the magnificence and fruits of the *Pradosha puja*. The *Pradosha Stotrashtakam* proclaims that those who perform the *puja* in the prescribed manner would be showered with wealth, health, knowledge, fame and salvation. By performing *Pradosha puja* they would have worshipped the whole pantheon of

Hindu gods as all the gods and goddesses participate in *Pradosha Tandava*.

What is Pradosha?

Dusk or evening twilight is the *Pradosha kala*, the time when 'creation' ceases and Iswara encompasses everything, absorbs everything back into Himself. Also the time He danced after retaining the deadly poison in His neck and saved the universe from destruction. It is a dance that enchanted everyone and hypnotised every being, and in which the whole celestial orchestra participated.

There are five *Pradoshas*: (1) *Nitya Pradosha*—daily *Sandhya* time; (2) *Paksha Pradosha*—*sukla paksha chaturthi* evening; (3) *Monthly Pradosha*—*Krishna paksha Trayodasi*; (4) *Maha Pradosha*—the Saturday on which the *Krishna paksha Trayodasi* happens to fall, the day on which the Lord first performed his *Pradosha Natanam*; hence most significant, and (5) *Pralaya Pradosham*—the dance at the time of total dissolution.

On all these five occasions, the Lord's dance is said to protect the universe. In the *puja vidhi*, besides the *Vigneswara puja*, *Nandikeswara puja* is equally important before proceeding to worship the *Pradosha Tandava Murti*.

(Courtesy "Tathvaloka" Published by the Sringeri Sarada Matam).



Swami Haridas-Father of Hindusthani Music

BY
Dr. K. J. JYENGAR, D. Lit. (USA)

Who has not heard of the inimitable Tansen, the all-time great musician in the court of Akbar? Again, which lover of Indian music has not known Tansen's guru, Swami Haridas as the Father of Hindusthani Music? It is common knowledge that even Tansen could not persuade Swami Haridas to grace Akbar's durbar; Akbar pined for that, without avail.

Ultimately it was Akbar who went earnestly seeking the heavenly music of Swami Haridas; actually the mountain went to Mohamet! Of course, Akbar was overwhelmed by the strains of Jeeva Nadham of Swami Haridas and enjoyed it, standing in disguise by the side of the Swamiji's hut; it was indeed music of the spheres. That was Swami Haridas.

The Mystery.

But his origin is shrouded in mystery; over the centuries legends have gathered round Haridas. Here is a gripping version of the birth, growth and flowering of this great musician-saint.

Flanked by River Kaveri on the South, by River Kollidam on the north, by Mukkombu on the west and Thirumanjana Kaveri on the east, is the sacred island of SRIRANGAM; it is aptly termed the Bhooloka Vaikuntam, heaven on earth indeed, with Lord Ranganatha reclining on the primordial Aadi Sesha. Sthala Purana says that the archavatara (idol) of Lord Ranganatha was the family deity of *nitya aradhana* of the Ikshvaku Vamsa. After vanquishing Ravana, Sri Rama with Sita Devi, Lakshmana, Vibhishana, Hanuman, etc., was returning triumphantly to Ayodhya. En

route they were halting at Srirangam for a spell of rest. Vibhishana was entrusted with the security of the idol of Lord Ranganatha for this journey south-north.

As Vibhishana had to perform ablution, he handed over the idol to Lord Ganesha who was standing by, for temporary safe-keeping, but the ever-playful Ganesha just laid down the idol on the ground merely to tease Vibhishana. On his return when Vibhishana tried to lift the idol to resume their onward journey to Ayodhya, he could not. Lord Ranganatha just remained stay-put for ever on that very spot. Thus it was that Lord Ranganatha Himself chose Srirangam as His permanent earthly abode and blessed Sri Rama and party to proceed to Ayodhya for the Pattabhisheka.

Krishna Bhattar, poor materially but spiritually strong, was the temple priest for doing the daily pooja of Lord Ranganatha. He was quite content with half the loaf that was the allotted lot for him and his family. Prema was his only daughter. The legendary Purandara Dasa, the architect of Carnatic Music, while on his padayatra, visited various places of pilgrimage; in Srirangam he was the guest of Krishna Bhattar. Thus, as a child, Prema had the good luck to be fondled by the great Purandara Dasa. He initiated her into Suddha Sangitha. As days passed, Prema became a blooming beauty and sang rapturously the Divya Prabanda Pasurams of the Alvars, the Vaishnavite mystics; the Bhakta rasikas lost themselves in her music and were one with Lord Ranganatha—such was the powerful sway of Prema's melody.

Nonetheless, as a father Krishna Bhattar was not free from the gnawing worry of a worthy husband for Prema. A distant relative married her and became a member of the Krishna Bhattar household. It did not take long to discover that this boy was twice cursed—an inveterate gambler and an incorrigible drunkard. There was no way out but to accept philosophically the woeful situation and carry on. Prema meanwhile conceived and brought forth a pretty male child. At this very moment of bliss, her husband was not only consumed by the liquor demon but also drowned in the raging floods of River Kaveri.

Despite this domestic tragedy, Prema's charming son named Lakshminarayanan (Narayan for short), was brought up with tender care and affection in the midst of utter poverty. Krishna Bhattar died a destitute. Having lost her mother as a child, Prema now became a real orphan with the passing away of her father also. She was in unbearable agony. Many a time she came to the very brink of suicide, only to draw back for the sake of her son and his future—his enticing looks and loving pranks saved her. But Srirangam became a veritable hell; she wanted to run away with her son somewhere, anywhere, far, far away from Srirangam.

Kasi Sojourn.

It was usual in those bygone days for pilgrims to go all over the country on foot from one *divya kshetra* to another. Prema along with her son joined one such group of pilgrims from the south on their way to Varanasi. Dharmashalas were aplenty in Varanasi and Prema found a real Dharmatma who was head of a chowtry there; he was looking after the daily needs of the Desa Yatriks. Comfortably settled

in this Dharmashala, Prema taught Narayan the rudiments of Carnatic music, in which she was an expert. Her son was no ordinary disciple and soon surpassed even his mother in the mastery of Carnatic music.

Ten-year old Narayan, already a prodigy in Carnatic music, became equally well-versed in Hindi on par with his mother-tongue Tamil. Prema came to be endearingly called Premabai by the neighbours. Such was her reputation as an orphaned widow with an up-and-coming boy of no mean looks and talents. Besides his daily learning and practice of music, he also assisted his mother in her domestic chores. In the evenings he used to accompany Premabai to some Satsang; he became a devout Krishna premi soon.

Discourses.

On the banks of the River Ganga it was a daily feature to have some religious discourse or another by eminent Pundits. A renowned scholar was giving a series of talks on Srimad Bhagavatam. Both mother and son did not miss any of the nine Skandas so far. The Pundit was to dilate on the beauties of the Dasamaskandam. Unfortunately that particular evening the Dharmadhikari called her back from the Satsang for some immediate work. She was torn between her eagerness to hear Krishna leelas from the scholar and the call of duty from the Dharmadhikari. Reluctantly, Premabai rushed back home, not without insisting on her son to continue with the Bhagavata Satsang. Of course, young Narayan on return from the discourse kept his mother abreast of what she had to miss for the sake of mundane duty. From that day onwards this became the normal practice, which turned out to be a great blessing in disguise; Narayan had to be

doubly alert with the Kalakshepas and became an expert himself in such puranic expositions.

One day Premabai asked Narayan to repeat in detail what the Powranika had elaborated that evening which she missed. He, therefore, depicted with warmth and picturesqueness the particular pranks of Sri Krishna playing in the dust and how the much annoyed Yashoda tied him up to a heavy stone-grinder with a thick rope to render him immobile; and how Sri Krishna merrily dragged and dragged that huge boulder all the way. Premabai was so moved by Narayan's soulful and graphic narration that she lost all sense of time and place; she got immersed in Sri Krishna's leelas galore.

Premabai wailed: "Oh, Krishna! How can your tender body drag that giant stone behind you? Your sides will ache and break by the tightening noose round your waist. Please wait, Krishna. I will snap that rope and free you from the menacing grinder to which Yashoda had so heartlessly fastened you. Wait, Krishna, wait! Here I am to help you." Crying and weeping like a frenzied woman Premabai was rushing headlong towards the banks of Mother Ganga. Not knowing what to do with this moving spectacle, Narayan likewise was running after his mother sobbing "Amma, Amma!" all the way with profuse tears rolling down his cheeks. The fellow-bhaktas in the Dharmashala were following suit.

With this seizure of God-fever, "Krishna Consciousness", Premabai plunged straight into the swirling waters of Ganga Mai in her attempt to save Krishna from the constraints of Yashoda. What divine

motherly instincts! Sant Premabai's body could not be traced thereafter; but those fortunate few who had the privilege of witnessing this memorable divine scene saw a blinding flash of Jyoti in the sky just above the spot of her plunge into the sacred Ganga; those Punyatmas joined their palms in prayerful salutation for her soul to rest in eternal peace.

Back to Srirangam

Young Narayan who lost his father in River Kaveri years ago and his mother now in River Ganga, returned to Srirangam, his birth place. There he saw the great Chaitanya Mahaprabhu and his group ecstatically singing and dancing before the sanctorum of Lord Ranganatha. He gave himself up to Chaitanya Mahaprabhu from that very moment and soon became the leading light of his Bhajana Goshti. The Mahaprabhu gave him Diksha and Narayan became a Sanyasin; thereafter he came to be known far and wide as Swami Haridas. As a consequence of the Moghul invasion, Swami Haridas was advised by Chaitanya Mahaprabhu to cross over to Persia for reasons of safety. He remained there for a few years as a wandering minstrel.

His knowledge of Carnatic music stood him in such good stead that it enabled him to gain a thorough insight into the intricacies of the Persian system of music; he soon came to be reckoned as a master of that style too.

After the petering out of the Moghul invasion, peace prevailed again in the north. Guru Chaitanya Mahaprabhu now advised his disciple Swami Haridas to return to his motherland. He came back and settled in Brindavan to a life of dedication and devotion to Sri Krishna; the medium used

by him to reach Sri Krishna within himself was, of course, Nama Sankirtanam for *atma-tripti*. He was immersed in it from dawn to dusk and even far into the night. Except for a few hours of sleep, he was all music and melody. His life itself was one long and lovely symphony—Bhagavataseva and Bhagavatarpanam through cascade after cascade of the sound of celestial music.

Swami Haridas it was who evolved a harmonious fusion of the Carnatic system and the Persian style and struck a new path which came to be christened as Hindusthani music. There can be no better example than the life and work of Swami Haridas for national and international integration through music and melody, for emotional harmony, cultural oneness, universal brotherhood,—and a truly liberated soul a Jeevan Mukta?



BOOK REVIEW

Vazhuvoorar Deiveeka Aadarkalai

By

Vazhavor B. RAMIAH PILLAI

(Bharata Natyam)—Published by Vazhuvoor Classical Bharata Natya Art Centre 12, Brindavan Street, Mylapore, Madras - 600 004 Tel. 72013 Hard Cover Calico Bound. Price Rs. 50/- First Edition 1987.

There is a paucity of source material on Bharata Natyam in the Tamil language. In view of the fact that the art has a hoary tradition on the Tamil soil dating back to the Silappadikaram days, the material that has found the light of publication is very little. The Saraswathi Mahal library, Thanjavur, the Music Academy, Madras and the U. V. Swaminatha Iyer Library and other institutions have brought forth a few treatises from time to time.

Hence, the publication of a book by Vazhuvoor Ramiah Pillai of the ancient Vazhuvoor tradition is a welcome event. As one who has reigned as a supreme in the world of dance, perpetuating a form ren-

owned for its exquisite grace and finesse and exemplified by his star pupils like Kamala, he would have made a valid contribution, had he chosen to record his methodology in the teaching of the art.

He has instead opted to publish 283 verses from the "*Koothilakkanam*" of Agathiyar, thereby providing significant source material, that must have served as a guide to the Natyacharyas through the centuries. However, the treatise seems to be of recent origins both from its language and its contents. The Agathiyar is not to be confused with the sage of Puranic legends. The phrase referring to the gesture of "Salaam to the Turukkar" (Mohammed-

ans) on page 18, is but one of the clues leading to placing the work after the Muslim invasion of South India.

The treatise is divided into Bhava-Iyal, Raga-Iyal, and Tala-Iyal, the terms from which is derived the acronym "Bharata". The first section deals with the single and double handed gestures, the movements of the head, feet and eyes, the navarasas etc. Some of the names and features are unique and are not to be found in other treatises. For instance, the single-handed gestures known as Chaalayam, Pooranam, Memilai and Munnadam are interesting variations not mentioned elsewhere. The author would have done well to include suitable illustrations especially when he presented rare and unknown features such as the above. In fact the only illustrations on pages 87—89 of the 108 karanas are such poor reproductions, that one wishes that a little more care had gone into the printing.

The second section on Raga has a number of peculiarities. The saptasvaras are classified into castes, Brahmin, Kshatriya and so forth. There are verses detailing the food, the perfumes, raiments, ornaments and the wives of the svaras! The list of ragams on pages 57—59 is a whimsical array of ragams, grouped in clusters with common surnames. Most of these rhymes appear to have very little reason behind them and throw no light on the scientific structure of Carnatic Music. Understandably the author offers no explanation either. For that matter, throughout the book, the verses are merely paraphrased with no attempt at analysis or assimilation.

The third section on Talams delineates the seven Talams and the ten Tala Pramanams.

The most interesting and useful information is gathered in the last chapter 'Ozhibiyal' dealing with aspects outside the purview of the first three. Specifications of the dancer, the stage, the making of various musical instruments, including the talam and the thattukazhi are given in meticulous detail. The Anga, Upanga, Pratyanga bedhams listed at the end could be used as a ready reckoner by students. The first lessons in solkattu will be invaluable for students of Nattuvangam. The Kauthuvams and the compositions of Vazhuvoor Samu Nattuvanar and of Ramiah Pillai which are already part of contemporary Bharata Natyam repertoire, have been recorded herein for posterity.

A noteworthy production, this book as a whole is perhaps intended more for the scholar than for the student. The wealth of material compiled warrants a more detailed and in-depth study by research scholars. The omission of a Table of Contents at the beginning and an Index at the end is a handicap. The author could with advantage include them in the subsequent edition. Strangely, while there is no Preface by the author, there are autobiographical digressions in the body of the treatise, which could be regarded as distinctly out of place. Errors of spelling are aplenty. But these are minor and remediable lapses considering the intrinsic merit of the total presentation by a reputed coterie of an ancient art form that is alive today.

SUJATHA VIJAYARAGHAVAN

Navagraha Kritis of Sri Muthuswamy Dikshitar

By

Y. V. Vydyanatha & V. S. Manjunath, Bangalore*

Revered Sri Muthuswamy Dikshitar is one of the Trinity of Karnatic music. His compositions in resonating Sanskrit, set to gripping talas, heart melting bhavas and haunting ragas are a treat to everybody, whether one has an insight into the depths of musical tradition or not. His compositions are varied, vivid and are unparalleled in their metre. Most of the deities of the Hindu pantheon have been extolled by him with high dignity and devotion.

The 'Navagraha krithis' by Dikshitar exhibit amply the above qualities of his compositions. As the story goes, these compositions were brought out extempore and given to one of his disciples to propitiate "Navagrahas" when he approached Dikshitar for blessings to ward off his temporal difficulties. These compositions exhibit the capacity of Dikshitar not only as a most valued composer in Karnatic music but also of his divine insight and knowledge of traditional sastras including Astrology.

The compositions of Dikshitar differ from those of his contemporaries in that the compositions have a Madhyama Kala Sahithyam embedded into a main Vilamba Kala Sahithyam. Amongst them also the Navagraha songs are unique in having the madhyama kala sahithyam in two places, one in Anupallavi and the other at the end of the song. For example,

(1) The composition on Lord Surya;

Its Pallavi and Anupallavi as follows.
Pallavi: Soorya Murthe Namosthutte,
Sundara Chayadhipathe. (Vilamba Kala Sahithyam)

Anupallavi: Arya Vinutha Theja
Spoorthe, Arogyadhi Phalada
Keerthe. (Madhyama Kala Sahithyam)

Sahithyam at the end of the song:
Sowrastrarna Manthrathmane
Sowvarna Swaroopathmane Bhar-
atheesha Hariharathmane Bhakthi
Mukthi Vitharanathmane (Madhyama Kala Sahithyam).

(2) The composition on Lord Moon:

Pallavi: Chandram Bhaja Manesa
Sadhujana Sadrusham.

Anupallavi: Indu Shodasha Kaladha-
ram Nishakaram, Indira Sahodha-
ram Nishakara Manisham (Madhyama Kala Sahithyam.)

Madhyama Kala Sahithyam at the end of the Song: Shashankam Geeshpathi
Shapanugraha pathram etc.

It is well known that only a composition with the correct confluence of Raga, Thala and Sahithyam, rendered with a right 'bhava', can elevate the mind of the

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listener to a higher plane. A glimpse of the above aspect can be very well visualized in singing the compositions of Dikshitar on Navagrahas.

The use of Raga "Saurashtra" for the composition on the "Sun", who is considered as "Saurastradhipathi" by the vedic lore; and of "Asaveri" which teems with "Karuna rasa Bhava" for the composition on Chandra, who is considered 'Sadhu Hridaya Sadrusham' (likened to heart of saintly men, and "Suruti", a mangala raga, for Kuja (Mangala Karaka) amply indicate the optimization in selecting the Ragas by Dikshitar. His genius is further evident in the selection of seven basic thalas for the seven planets. His vilamba kaala composition with a slow pacing raga like Yadukula Kambodhi set to Eka thala on Lord Shani, the slow moving planet, shows the masterly craftsmanship. Similarly, the composition on Shukra is in the Raga Pharaz, a janya of Mayamalava gowla. Mayamalava Gowla is the basic raga for learning music and Shukra is the presiding god of musical art. So the selection of Pharaz, which is a rarely sung raga, is not only in tune with tradition but also throws a challenge to the skilled musician. The usage of Mela Kartha ragas for the compositions on Rahu and Kethu in Rama Manohari (Rama Priya) and Chamara (Shanmukha Priya) proves the importance attached by Dikshitar to these Chaya Grahas (Shadow Planets).

His composition on Lord Soorya starts with "Oh!, embodiment of effulgence!, my prostrations to thee". In the traditional Vedic lore, Sun is Namaskara Priya and this aspect has been very well blended into the song. His compositions on Kuja and Budha start with "I take refuge in Lord

Angaraka and Lord Budha (by using the word Ashrayamyaham)" considering that Kuja is a princely planet and Bhoomi Karaka, and Budha being Vyshya (businessman) and Buddhi Karaka, the word "Ashrayamyaham" is most appropriate for these compositions, as normally all individuals depend upon Land, Money, Power or Intellect. His composition on Chandra starts with "Oh! Mind, dwell on the Divine Moon who is as sweet as the hearts of saintly men". The astrological canons define moon as Mano Karaka, hence the composition starting with "Chandram Bhaja Manasa" reveals Dikshitar's faith in astrology.

His compositions particularly those on Sun, Kuja and Shukra reveal the stellar lordship of these planets, their relationships with other planets, their natural powers, their personifications, their pleasing objects and also the ways of propitiating them fully.

The lyrical beauty with which he has denoted the stellar lordship of Shukra as "Vrishha Thuladheesha" and the exaltation of Kuja as "Makarothungam" in his compositions on Kuja and Sukra are unique.

An outstanding aspect of Dikshitar's compositions on Navagrahas is the way he personifies the natural abilities of the planets. Wherever he can indicate their natural characters or abilities (Karakatvas) directly, he has done so; like Putra Karaka for Brihaspathe, Raja Yoga Karaka for Shukra and Bhatru Karaka for Kuja. Wherever perhaps for the sheer requirement of thala or Meter, where the planet's natural abilities cannot be given out fully, their Karakatvas have been personified. The vivid composition on Kuja and the way

Kuja has been personified as Rakthangam, Manda Smitha Vakthram, very well indicate the Karakatva of Kuja, who is the Karaka for blood and bestows a youthful and attractive face. Similar compositions on Sun, Shani and Rahu give ample guidance to astrologers. His descriptions of Sun as Teja Spoorthe, Arogyadhi Phalada Keerthe and of Shanaischara as Bhayankaram, Athi Kroora Phaladam and Kalanjana Kanthiyuktha Deham, and about Rahu as Roga, haram, Sarphadhi Bheethi Haram, show the total awareness of astrological canons. It is no wonder that such heavenly composi-

tions on the Navagrahas can move the planets to yield the best of fruits to the singer when sung with devotion. The more one studies these compositions, one wonders at his colossal contribution to the musical world.

We end this article with a thousand salutations to that masterly craftsman Sri Muthuswamy Dikshitar who is the very embodiment of Nada, Veda, Manthra, Thanthra, Yanthra, and Jyothishya shastras.

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S. ANANTHA SESHAN

Spiritualism in Hindusthani Music

By

Dr. S. SRINIVASAN BOMBAY

Music is undoubtedly a powerful medium for the expression of human emotions, especially when man wants to communicate with the Supreme Being. It is a unique gift of God to man, as no other species in God's creations is known to possess this ability. More potent than the spoken word in its intensity of impact on the listener, it is an ever useful avenue for introspection.

Without exception, all religions of the world have made extensive use of music in their teachings and practice. Early Christians, for instance, used the Plainsong for chanting the various parts of their services including the central ritual of mass. Similarly, Vedic incantations have since time immemorial formed the very backbone of our spiritual recitals. The Sama Veda has been acknowledged as the mother of Indian classical music, thus signifying the intimate relationship this art form enjoyed, and continues to enjoy, with the spiritual paths leading to the Supreme One.

Volumes have been written on the evolution of classical music through the ages in parallel with the religious—spiritual movements of the land. In the present article, an effort is made to focus on the element of spiritualism-cum-devotionalism in classical Hindustani music as it is practised today. This writer is a person with a Southern background practising the Northern system solely. The views expressed in this article are subject to this qualification but the writer hopes that his observations and pleas would be considered with due earnestness by all students of music.

Carnatic versus Hindustani music

The fundamental theme of any kirtana or kriti in Carnatic music is more or less a direct praise or prayer to the Lord, worshipped in any form out of the Hindu pantheon. In contrast, the *khayal* form of Hindustani classical music most widely followed today has a 'bandish' or 'cheeza' wherein the lyrics often have very few phrases and whatever text is discernible, has a palpably romantic slant, purportedly referring to the 'leelas' of Lord Krishna. But that is as close to the Lord as they can possibly get. This difference has been the subject of animated discussions at various forums which one should steer clear of in the present context. Suffice it to say that the arguments in defence of such romantic 'bandishes', giving them a metaphysical twist, e.g. the pining of the nayika for the beloved being equated with that of the jeevatma for the paramatma, and so on, can at best be considered a long short, and may not convince everybody.

No matter how one interprets the various *khayal bandishes*, it is clear that in most instances they do not offer a concrete foundation on which to build a spiritual or devotional edifice while singing them. Hence the oft felt need to sing *bhajans* as tail-pieces in a Hindustani recital if the singer wants to bring in more bhakti bhava in his portrayal.

Now, does it follow that *khayal* singing is sterile to the extent that it is devoid of spiritualism of any measure whatsoever?

Is it merely a permutation or combination of swaras displayed as pure entertainment? My own answer to this question is an unequivocal 'no'. Let me elaborate.

Long notes, mental concentration and Nadabrahama in khayals

The prerequisites of this hypothesis is of course a spiritually inclined persona of the *khayal* singer, if not also of the audience. This may be a prerequisite in Carnatic music as well, since even an emotion-laden Tyagaraja kriti can be rendered sterile by inept handling by a feelingless singer. The difference, if any, may well be in degree and not in kind.

The backbone of *khayal* singing is really the *vilambit* wherein the long notes have to come through, pure, steady and smooth. This requires extraordinary mental concentration on the part of the singer, and perhaps an equal degree of concentration on the part of the listener too, to be a meaningful dialogue. The lyrics play a negligible role in this kind of exposition. The abstract beauty and serenity of a pure swara are what matters to the singer and listener alike.

What is the physiological side of this phenomenon? A cerebral command that is translated into phonation through the vocal cords and muscles of respiration, with the resultant sound energy giving a positive feedback via the auditory nerve to the cerebrum, which in turn reinforces the command, and so the cycle goes on. This process may take years or decades to perfect. The longer and greater the precision of cerebral energy input, the stronger the positive feedback and more effective the re-

inforcement of the cycle. The entire process has to be experienced first-hand to be well understood and here, the longer and smoother the swaras, the better is the impact, both internal and external. As the singer literally immerses himself into the swara, his very *prana* merges imperceptibly with the *nada*; and the end result cannot but be the sublimation of the inner self of the singer. The same phenomenon can also occur in the listener if the wavelengths of communication and response match precisely. If this does not take the Self at least a step closer to the ultimate realisation with the Supreme as described in Advaita, what else can? This state should eventually transcend the boundaries of the senses, and there one is almost one with *brahma* in the form of *nada*, a phenomenon beyond the capacity of words to describe.

Now, this may sound like the ideal, for it does not happen always when a *khayal* singer is singing *vilambit*, but the goal must always be there. Nor for that matter every Carnatic vocalist rendering a Tyagaraja kirtana can claim to capture, let alone transmit, the spiritual ecstasy of the Great Master when he composed the piece. As with religion, so with music. The inadequacy is, as a rule, not that of the system but of the individual practising it. There is no short cut to achieving this ideal; but a step-by-step approach of silently praying within oneself to the Almighty in the form of swara, as each note unfolds, can go a long way in making the swaras a better vehicle of communication. In other words, irrespective of the lyric, a *vilambit khayal* with a latent prayer is always more musical than without it.

What about *madhya laya* and *drut*? Can they be as spiritually laden as the *vilambit*.

in the light of the above? In my view they can only be less close to the spiritual element than the vilambit; inasmuch as more and more of sensorimotor coordination, rather than steady cerebral concentration, comes into operation during these phases. By extension of this concept, the greater the dominance of speed and *laya-kari*, the greater the chances of extroverted dimension of music and the greater the distance from the sublime elements of spirituality of the art form.

Bhajan singing in Hindustani music

The natural consequence of the above phenomenon is the necessity felt in many instances to add an explicitly devotional item towards the end of a Hindustani recital to elevate the level of singer-audience interaction. This may or may not be projected by some artistes, depending upon their innate urge, or lack of it, to add a new dimension to their own individualised music. But those who do, certainly gain by it, for it touches some indefinable inner cord in every individual as he or she carries home its lingering impact long after the recital is over.

To be effective, bhajan singing has to be characterised by utter simplicity of style just as we go to the temple not in our sartorial best, but in the simplest of attire and manner. The mood should be one of humanity and total surrender to the Almighty. Alas, this is often not met with in the modern versions of bhajans which tend to resemble pop music at worst or ghazals at best, despite the choice of the verses of the greatest saints. More than with khayal vilambit, this writer believes that the singer should keep offering silent mental prayers to his personal god even before starting

the bhajan and should continue the process through it. Slow but tuneful incantations of the Lord's name in a chosen raga, which is often Sindhu Bhairavi, as this may be the last item of a recital, certainly help a great deal. The opening phrases of the verse need to be clearly and slowly enunciated even without layakari so that the theme of the bhajan sinks into the listener.

For the best communication and rapport with the audience, simply worded verse is preferred, as every one can understand the contents easily. There is nothing to equal the magnetic effect of the Lord's name repeated in a spontaneous mood of surrender. Plain delivery of devotional themes of prostration to the Lord supplemented by philosophical ones relating to the futility of human emotions like vanity, envy, fury and pride or the ephemerality of material possessions like wealth and power, serves as an effective impetus to the singer and audience alike to introspect and resort to course correction. The sincerity of the singer should be conveyed through clarity of pronunciation to ensure a natural effect. Musical virtuosity must be relegated to the background. The rhythm chosen should be simple too.

Flashy orchestras with the alien sounds of guitar and the like only mar the effect. The soft drone of two tanpuras with one gentle accompaniment each for swara and tala should serve best. Those who consider this to be an anachronistic concept in this day and age of jazzy, dashy, piped bhajans should be reminded that, in contrast to the showmanship of a mere performing artiste, what we are dealing with here is not only the flesh-and-blood thrill of the spirituality of classical music but the one-to-one equation of singer-listener interaction in a rather

exclusive atmosphere against a backdrop of what may be called "swara-shabda-bhava sangam".

Idealism versus expediency

One can almost hear the reader wondering whether all this is just esoteric and wishful thinking. This writer would submit that not only is all this possible but it can and does happen, given the right approach, even to you and me. It is tempting to give up one's pursuit of an ideal on one pretext or another, but the artiste should not too easily take to the path of expediency on the premise that the audience would not mind such a deviation. While it is true that an audience gets what it deserves, it is equally true that the audience has often to swallow whatever is dished out. If the artiste makes a sincere attempt to elevate the audience perception even one step closer to the ideal, the latter would respond with genuine warmth and the argu-

ment of expediency that is so commonly flaunted today can be refuted, at least in the realm of classical music.

To sum up, whereas the Carnatic system of classical music offers a more or less ready-made capsule in the form of kirtanas of the great composers in which the spiritual facet stands out, the Hindustani system has to rely heavily on the individual personality of the singer to get close to the abstract beauty of *nada* in the *vilambit khayal* and often to supplement it with a specific bhajan form which is more easily palpable to the singer and listener alike. But the difference ends here. Irrespective of the system of music one follows, it is ultimately the innermost core of the mind of the singer that matters and comes through spontaneously. It is the only thing that will invest music with a dimension out of the ordinary.

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TILLANA—A SPARKLING ART FORM

By

Dr. GOWRI KUPPUSWAMY & Dr. M. HARIHARAN

Tillāna is one of the Prabandha varieties that came into vogue and attained immense popularity after the time of the Trinity. The Desi Prabandhas of the medieval period in the history of our music are the forerunners of all the forms representative of the art—sacred, secular, dance and instrumental music that emerged later. The Tillana, characterized by a profusion of rhythmic syllables, is no exception. As regards the etymology of the term Prabandha, it is generally believed that it is based on the words Pada and Bandha. 'Padabandha' became 'Prabandha' to mean a composition bound by certain rules and regulations relating to structure, theme, etc.

Origins.

There is a widespread conception that the Tillāna is derived from the North Indian form Tarana. However, there is sufficient evidence in diverse Lakshana treatises to controvert this view, notwithstanding the fact that Tillāna got a fillip from the plethora of Hindustani musicians who flocked to the Tanjore royal court during the Maratha rule and popularised various North Indian musical forms including Tarana.

Our earliest music and dance treatise, Bharata's Nāṭya Śāstra, does not refer to Prabandha as such, but 'Geetha' or 'Geethi'—a composition with rhythmic bias—finds a place there. A type of Geethi

called Khaṇḍika, centred on mystic syllables, was pronounced by Brahma for the proper development of art and Bharata, as His chosen mouth piece, propagated them for the benefit of humanity.

"Jhanthum jhanthum Digi Digi Digi
Jhanthum jagati avalī taka kacha jhala
Titi Jhala Pasupati Digi Digi vadir
Goganapathi titidha
Digi taga jhaneum jhanthum tagu Digi"

These syllables formed the nucleus for rhythmic solfa. The Tamils seized upon them with alacrity. Successive generations of musicians in the South developed it as a vital branch of the art sparkling with a whole world of fascinating solfa syllables for rhythm.

Nexus with Hindusthani

The popular notion that the Tillāna is exclusively an adaptation from Hindustani compositions of analogous character like Tarana is ill-founded. Sarngadeva's Sangita Ratnakara itself contains incontrovertible data which can help to correct this misconception. Karana Prabandha is described in this treatise as comprising a mixed medley of Svara, Pada and rhythmic phrases interspersed. When Gopala Nayaka was taken away to the north by the Muslims as a prisoner, he endeared himself to his captors through his extraordinary talents and erudition in music. Gopala Nayaka is reputed

to have taught Amir Khusru, among other things, the Karana Prabandha which later flowered as the Tillana or the Tarana. Drawing inspiration from this Prabandha and using the traditional form of 'dhrupa pada' hymns or quatrains and their shortened syllables employed in Indian vocalizing (such as 'tum' 'dar' 'dani' etc.) in combination with certain words from the Persian which also had abstract connotations, Khusru paved the way for the musical form which came to be known as Tarana. Thus, one may regard the Tillana or Tarana type of composition to be the product of composite North and South Indian intelligence, with roots in the Prabandhas.

Prabanda

Prabandha is made up of 4 dhatus or avyayas—Udgaraha, Mēlapaka, Dhruva and Ābhōga, corresponding respectively to the present day Pallavi, Anupallavi, Charana and concluding portion of Charana. Whether the Prabandha comprises all these four avyayas or only three (tridhatu) or two (dvidhatu), it has in all six angas—Svara and Tala as well as Biruda, Pada, Tenaka and Pāṭa. Among these, the first two established the Nir yukta (Nibaddha) character of the Prabandha ensuring its steady course from Udgaraha to Abhoga. Diverse musical forms gradually emerged from the Prabandhas depending upon the relative importance of the other four angas in their make up. A form characterised by preponderance of Pāṭa is the Tillana. It heads the list of Pāṭa-prominent forms of similar nature like Solkattusvaram, Kaivara prabandham, Geeta Prabandham, Jatisvaram, Daru varnam, etc.

Patas

Pāṭa itself is a term referring in general to Vādyalankaras or instrumental sounds and in course of time came to signify the rhythmical sounds produced by percussion instruments. Muraja Pāṭas are the rhythmic sounds that are born out of the percussion of skin-covered instruments like Mridangam, Maddalam, Muraja, etc. These sounds are denoted by simple syllables like Tha, Nam, Ki, Ṭa, Thi, La, Na, Dhom, Dham, Jham, Nam, Thiru, Tharu, etc. When these individual syllables are grouped together, we get compound syllables like Thaka, Thakṛṭa Thakaddhimi, Thakajanu, Tharikita, Thiru, thiru, Thilana, etc. This is the genesis of the term Tillana. These compound syllables belong to the realm of Pata among the Prabandha angas and are also known as jatis. When pronounced as such without admixture with any other anga (as for instance, svaras) it is termed Kanugol which is sometimes employed as a Tala accompaniment. On the other hand, when the jatis get interspersed with the Saptasvaras, it becomes a case of Misrapatas called Solkattusvaras (Solkattu). This is the essential fabric in the structure of the Tillana.

Talas

Chronologically, the term Prabandha is mentioned for the first time in the Brahadēsi of Matanga wherein it is stated that they emerged from the five faces of Lord Siva. Prabandhas were classified into Nibaddha and Anibaddha, depending respectively on whether or not they were set to Tala. The Nir yukta prabandhas belonging to the former variety were prescribed to be sung only to certain specific Talas, metres, sentiments etc. Sarngadeva, who draws profusely upon Matanga, Some-svara, Jagadekamalla etc., for his description

of the Prabandhas delineates several of these compositions which are ragamalikas, and talamalikas both under the Alikrama and Viprakīrṇa varieties. Pañchatalēśvaram was sung in the 5 Marga talas to the accompaniment of Pataksharas from Pataha, Hudukka, Sānkha, Kamsyāta and Muraja respectively in addition to svara exposition. Five varieties of Patas (Nagabandha, Svastika Alagna, Suddhi and Somaskhalita) are believed to have emanated from the five faces of Siva as did also the five margatalas, themselves.

Types of Prabandas, Raga & Tala

Historically, compositions with Pāṭas, Svaras and Sahitya together or separately in diverse angas can be traced to the medieval Prabandhas - particularly the Karana and Kaivara prabandhas. According to Sārṅgaḍeva, the Prabandhas are classified into three major divisions—Sada Prabandhas, Alikrama prabandhas and Vipra-Keerna prabandhas. Whereas the Karana Prabandha is the second among the eight subdivisions of the Sūḍa Prabandha, the Kaivara prabandha is the fourth among the twentyfour sub-divisions of the Alikrama prabandha.

Matanga has listed only two Karana Prabandhas - (1) Bhandā Karana made up of Muraja aksharas and svaras and set to any tala and (2) Pada Karana which is constituted of hasta patas. According to Govinda Dikshitar and Venkatamakhi, Bhandā Karana is a variety wherein the Udgraha Dhruva contain cleverly interwoven Muraja Patas. In the Patakarana, the hasta patas also figure along with svaras in the Udgraha. In the Citrakarana, while the Udgraha consists of svaras and hasta patas, the Dhruva section is made up of Muraja patas and Pada.

In the Kaivara Prabandha, which may be regarded as another immediate precursor of the Tillana, the Udgraha and Dhruva sections in general comprise Patas while the Abhoga section includes Pada. Out of the nine prabandhas which figure in Subbarama Dikshitar's Sangeeta Sampradaya Pradar-sini, only the relatively long Gowri Raga prabandham is completely bereft of Pata or Jati. The lakshya prabandham in Hamsadhvani raga (Matya), the Srirangaprabandham in Bhowli (Eka) and the Umātilaka prabandhas in Mechabhāuli (Triputa) and in Huseni (Eka) have comparatively sparse jatis. On the other hand, jatis are prominent in the frame-work of Kabhai (Desiya) prabandhas in Pharaz (Adi) and Yamunakalyani (Adi) as also in the Gowla raga prabandham (Jampa). In fact the latter prabandham has been presented as a Kaivara Prabandha by Harikesanallur Subramaniam in his book 'Geetha Prabandha Mala'. Venkatamakhi's Kaivara Prabandham in Narayana Gaula (Matya) featured in the Sangita Sampradaya Pradar-sini may well serve as the model for the Kaivara Prabandha. It consists of 4 Khandas - Patava Khandam, Javada, Alapa Khandam and Mudra Khandam. The first two sections are made up entirely of Patas or jatis. Along with a few words of Sahitya, the Alapa Khandam comprises essentially vowel extensions presumably for the purpose of facilitating raga alapa or elaboration. The final Mudra khandam which contains the Vaggeyakara and Prabandha Mudras ends in jatis. The feature of the composition beginning as well as ending in jatis (Pata) is also seen in many other Kaivara Prabandhas presented in the Prabandha Mala under reference - those in Nata (Rupakam), Gowla (Jampa). This lends unequivocal support to the view that

Tillana was evolved out of the Kaivara Prabandas.

Advent of Jatis

Narayana Tirtha and Uttukkadu Venkatasubbier were the earliest Vaggeyakaras to make use of jatis in their compositions. The former's Krishna Leela Tarangini contains exquisite Solkattus, particularly in the context of describing the Rasakreeda and Radhakrishna episodes. Uttukadu Venkatasubbier's Rasa Sabda kirtanas are replete with attractive Chittasvaras as well as jati passages characterised by a profusion of diverse rhythmic patterns including Tisram, Misram, Khandam and Sankirnam. A Tillana in the Puranirmayi Pann is ascribed to this composer. Melattur Virabhadrayya is credited with being the creator of the musical form Tillana. His composition Dani Tillilana in Pantuvarali raga (Adi) carries the Achyuta Varada Mudra:

"Dani tillana thana thamdari
Nadiri dirana thamdari dirana
Tillana dattillana tirana daritillana
tirina.

Elukora jil jil jil
Manuchun tamigaligenu idugo
sarasunika ippudu
Achyuta varadananthu"

Another ancient Tillana is the one composed by a North Indian musician at the court of Tulaja Maharaja in Tanjore in praise of his royal patron. Set to Kalyani raga and Adi tala it runs as follows:

"Thai thai thayim dhattha thinna
digi digi

Tulaja raja chattrapathi chiranjeevi
Tam thaddha digitha tham thaddha
digitha

Thalangu thagadha thaka thalangu
thagadha thaka thalangu taga taga"

Jatis along with Solkattusvaras and Chittasvaras are the major constituents of the Tillana. Sahitya is used sparingly merely as the vehicle for Devata or Poshaka stuthi, besides the composer's signature. However, instances are also known of Tillanas with no sahitya whatsoever as indicated below (Yaman raga, Tisra Gathi, Eka Tala)

Pallavi

Udadana dirinare

Anupallavi

Danadheem danadheem dhanadhee

Charana

Nadiri diridani thom diridirithani
dana ilalo

Thadani dani ilalo dana dheem dana
dheem dana dheem

Role in Dance & Music Concerts.

As a form belonging at once to the spheres of both art and dance music, Tillana finds a place as an indispensable captivating item in music as well as dance concerts. In the former, it provides a crisp finale after the heavy dose of Ragam, Tanam and Pallavi. In the latter, it comes as a welcome lively change with its quick tempo music following the leisurely Abhinaya for the long drawn out Padam. Being intended mainly to project the pure Nritya aspect of Bharatanatyam, the Tillana enables the dancer to exhibit mastery in this aspect with scintillating footwork and poses. The introduction of cross rhythms with unlimited scope for variations confers additional beauty and charm on this composition. In Harihatha kalakshepam, Tillana

is traditionally rendered immediately after the introductory "Purva-pitika" with a view to evolving the proper musical atmosphere! Sometimes the Harikatha performer may also suddenly switch over to a sprightly Tillana in the midst of his discourse just to relieve the monotony of the audience.

In the sphere of Abhyasa Ganam too, Tillanas have great value. To the vocalist, singing these compositions would help to impart good training to the tongue since other jatis in the 4th degree of speed have to be rendered with clarity. In the case of instrumentalists, Tillanas provide scope for useful training in swift bowing or fast plucking.

Compositions.

The Tillana comprises three sections (Trikanada) Pallavi, Anupallavi and Charanam. While the Anupallavi is made up entirely of jatis, the Charana (which scarcely exceeds one in number) carries the composer's signature in its sahitya besides solfa syllables and jatis. However, instances are also known of Dvikhanda Tillanas consisting of only Pallavi and Anupallavi and Charanam. In the former case the Anupallavi is constituted of jatis, Chittasvara and Sahitya.

The Sahitya in the Tillana is in any one of the South Indian languages besides Sanskrit. The galaxy of prominent Tillana composers include Svati Tirunal, the Tanjore Quartette, Mysore Sadasiva Rao, Kunrakkudi Krishna Iyer, Maha Vaidyanatha Iyer, Patnam Subramanya Iyer, Pallavi Seshayyar, Mysore Seshanna, Ramuad Srinivasa Iyengar and Muthiah Bhagavathar.

Tillana is a short and lively composition. Those that figure in music concerts

hardly take a few minutes to perform. Most Tillanas are set in Madhyamakala. As an example of Vilamba kala Tillana may be cited Pallavi Seshayyar's Vasanta Tillana 'Jham jham tarita jham'. Sangatis adorn such Tillanas.

Structure.

Some Tillanas are scholarly compositions. The Kanada Tillana 'Gowri Nayaka' of Maha Vaidyanatha Iyer in Simhanandana tala belongs to this category as does the Todi Kambaramayana Tillana 'Dana tana tirana' of Kunrakkudi Krishna Iyer. Tillana Daru resembles Tillana in beginning and ending with jatis but differs in respect of a large proportion of words in its matu. Krishnaswami Ayya's Tillana Daru in Surati raga, Adi tala, beginning with the jatis 'Nadiri tani timdari' is an excellent representative of this type of composition.

The vast majority of Tillanas have been composed in Adi Tala. Tillanas in other talas are very few. Apart from Mahavaidyanatha Iyer's Simhanandana Tala Tillana already referred to, Ramnad Srinivasa Iyengar has to his credit a Tillana in Lakshmi tala—one of the 108 talas.

The early composers employed mostly Ghana ragas for composing their Tillanas, but with the passage of time there was a noticeable trend towards the adoption of Desiya ragas. Tillanas can be classified into classical and light-classical varieties.

During the past few years, there has been a welcome spurt in the composition of Tillanas by many senior performing musicians. The Tillana has come to stay.

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Kusalavajanaka!

By

Smt. SAVITHRI RAJAN

The Hamirkalyani came like a sooth breeze; it was Maharajapuram Viswanatha Iyer's archive recording being played as part of the Golden Jubilee Series of the All India Radio, Madras.

Kusalavajanaka! Tyagaraja has addressed his Rama by epithets and endearments galore rich in context and concept. Many relationships have been indicated - Dasaratha's son, Sugriva's friend, Lashmana's elder brother, the pride of Raghu's line, the Suryavamsatilaka, Sita's beloved, Janakiramana, Ravanari and so on; but father of Lava-Kusa is a rare one.

It stirred me to churn the controversy again. Centuries of epic lovers, Sanskrit scholars, bhakta-s all have waxed eloquent on this 'blemish' of Rama. They have taken to advocacy, to argue the case for and against. That steel of a soldier, the 'obey-orders' brother Lakshmana's eyes are downcast. What a cruel decision! How could he take an expectant mother and abandon her, lure her to the forest she loves, then announce the cruel verdict? Yet fully surrendered sagunopāsaka and bhakta that he is, Lakshmana carries it out.

'You have no dākṣiṇya, yet you are called karunāsāgara'—*"gānamura nīvale nirmōhini"*—Such an indifferent, casual, uncaring one I have not come across *"Mānamu lēda, abhimānamu lēda?"* What poignant queries? What if Valmiki has sung an epic, a saga to your glory? He has no absolute monopoly over you. We can sing, praise or accuse you intimately because we are yours-tanavādani - of supreme intimacy. 'Sugriva, the son of Surya-Ravitanayudu' flattered you - *"bāsaln*

balkaga"—looked up to you for succour; you were in the same straits, no kingdom, no wife, refugee in distress, seeker. Yet you impulsively crowned him the *'simhasanadipati'*, a king without a kingdom, because you were "every inch a king". 'I am yours, still you are indifferent; yet Sugriva's flattering praise made you act. I seek refuge in you and wait for your grace, there you bestow a kingdom!'"

The chargesheet is perfect with evidence complete.

The blending of *bhāva* and *rāga* in the rendering of *"gānamura nīvale nirmōhini"* runs through in melody. 'Valmiki, gifted by the Gods, wrote the world's great *mahākāvya*, set it to music and directed the two beautiful charming boys to sing the story to you! *Kusalavajanaka!* Now do you know they are your sons, abandoned by you? Your deserted wife Sita bore them, and with them, such trials and travails! Have a thought for her fortitude. You are proud of your *ēkapatni vrata* and fidelity'. 'What is public opinion? What is slander? What is character assassination? Opinion polls are taken into account only when in doubt. *"Ganaruchiteliyu Kusalavajanaka"* comes the refrain. Your cheeks as you listen to the lofty soul stirring verses and music. "A man who hath no music in his heart"—you are not such a one; the music of your sons touches a chord inside you, who is worshipped and sung by Tyagaraja.

All emotions melt in *nāda*. Tyagaraja drops the curtain on this high drama which exemplifies the union of hearts and tears blending in *nāda* to unite the *jīvatma* and *paramātma* in and through *nāḍopāsana*.

The Hamirkalyani haunts; touches my inner cord, envelops the atmosphere. Wraps me in it.

"Haridasa vedale mucchatikane,
Anandamaye dayālo"

Character Study In Abhinaya

By

Smt. KALANIDHI NARAYANAN

In the contemporary classical dance of Tamil Nadu viz., Bharatha Natyam, its elements of Nritta (body movements without any meaning to convey) and Nritya (dance which is body movements plus Bhava or portrayal of emotions) were adopted from the great Bharatha Sastra, which is the earliest literature in the Indian dance drama and music. Regarding the Nritta aspect, most of the movements of the *anga* (limbs) have been prescribed in the Natya Sastra which have been adopted in Bharatha Natya to bring out the aesthetic beauty of the body lines through dance.

It is the Nritya aspect that Abhinaya features. This is the expression of varied emotions and moods through facial expression, *angas* and *upangas* and through *hastas* (hand gestures). Abhinaya can be brought out through four media, namely, Angika-movements of the body limbs and postures; Vachika-communication through musical songs; Acharya-through the realm of external elements like costume, make-up, stage decor and lighting; Satvika—the most important, through emotions produced by the face of the artist.

Music

Abhinaya will be most effective if modulated music, with control of the voice as per the mood and movement of the dance is sung. Our great composers of padams have of course tuned songs to suit the emotion in the lyric of the songs. Hence if a little thought is given and pains taken in

singing which is not very difficult, you will achieve a glorious result, which is *sukalasyam*. In every padam, you can bring out this aspect.

Angika

Again, in order to make Angika abhinaya effective, positioning and movement of the limbs should be perfect. More than being perfect, the positions should suit the character and mood. For e.g. while portraying sorrow, if the head and chin are held up and the body falls back on the foot, the posture will seem more like pride than sorrow even if the face puts on a sad expression. Again if you are to point to an elder and say "You", *suchi hastha* or pointing your forefinger will seem inappropriate, but on the other hand if *pathakahastha*, that is, pointing the whole palm, is used with slightly drooped shoulders, it will bring out the necessary respect effectively. Hundreds of examples are there, but impossible to put them all in writing. But this aspect should be borne in mind while teaching.

Abhinaya devoid of Satvika is like food without salt. The gestures, movements, positioning may all be perfect but if the mood is not expressed, then it does not give the fullness to abhinaya. It can be compared to a dancing doll and not a human being.

Character Study

Now I come to the main topic of my article viz- Character study. To start

right from the basic, a careful study of the song in its entirety must be made and the main thread of thought must be understood and grasped. The main thought is the Sthayi bhava around which all the other emotions revolve. Keeping the Sthayi Bhava in mind, one must probe into the type of Character and make a thorough study of the song. The next step is this: since every song involves two or more characters they must only play a subtle and secondary part to the primary character. Once this has been worked out systematically, all importance and prominence should be given to the main character, whether it is the Nayaka or Nayika or Saki etc.

Nayika

For instance, a sequence in a Varnam deals with a Nayika or Heroine asking her friend not to make fuss but to go at once to her lord and bring him to her. Now the Nayika, meaning the heroine, being the main character, one should portray the Nayika telling the friend to go, ordering her, requesting her, chiding her, pleading with her and so on and could also imitate the fuss she is making and the reactions of the friends' behaviour. But to live the role of the *saki* or friend by saying "I am busy, I have no time" etc. and thereby highlighting her character is not correct. One other example: while referring to the greatness of the Lover, one should not at once act the part of the lover to show valour, knowledge, beauty etc but it should be suggested by the heroine herself. Once every character involved is portrayed or given prominence and highlighted and acted, out of it comes pure drama and no more of dance which is a suggestive art form.

Sanchari Bhava

Again another major point which unfortunately is being mis-interpreted is the term *sanchari bhava*. If this is analysed, the thoughts would all be suggestive; if not it will be guilty of having aided unnecessary drama. It actually should be expressed by various ideas and moods confining itself within the boundary of the song. For e.g. if the theme in the song deals with the Nayika waiting eagerly for her lover, ideas such as getting dressed up, getting ready the bed, milk, flowers, sandal paste etc are usually conveyed. But to elaborate it to the extent of showing the combing of every strand of hair, knotting of fallen hair and throwing it away sadly or walking all round the stage to pick flowers, smelling them, throwing them away etc, will all amount to drama and misuse of *sanchari bhava*.

No Drama

Sanchari Bhava figures a lot in the Bhakthi themes where the main characters are Gods and Goddesses around whom a number of stories and interesting episodes have been woven in our mythology. To take advantage of this and act in drama form the whole story wherever a slightest chance is available in the song is again not proper, though indeed it would be interesting to figure out these episodes. For e.g. in the well known song of "Krishna nee begane baro", in the last charanam showing how Krishna eats mud and how the Gopi of Yasoda comes in search of him and how he opens his mouth and how Yasoda beats him and finally how she sees the entire world in his mouth if acted by a girl of above 15 years of age, it looks unconvinc-

ing. Instead, we can just narrate the story in a line and subtly depict all that the mother saw in the mouth of Krishna.

Again, while portraying the emotions of the characters of episodes, the whole personality of the persons should be well reviewed in its totality and the expression mood, movement etc must all ideally suit the character. For instance, if one were to portray Lord Rama in anger, to stand with blazing eyes, twitching of all face muscles, trembling of the body etc would all be overdone. Viewing his character as suppressed anger would be the ideal thing.

Sringara

The main essence of Padams is Sringara (love). The relationship between man and woman is Sringara, between mother and child is Vathsala Sringara. Sringara in its highest form is Bhakthi. Sringara is not always vulgar and a cheap exhibition of love. So, expressing it must be portrayed with dignity and with subtlety and suggestive emotions which will enhance the rich-

ness of the art and not lower its greatness. But it will be effective only if, as far as possible, the characters involved are dealt with as "uttama" personalities. So it is in the hands of the teacher and the artist to portray emotion with dignity and subtlety and create an atmosphere of aesthetic beauty which should elevate oneself and the audience.

Again, some songs can be dealt with and approached in more than one way, hence it is for the teacher and the artist to point out the best way which will suit the artist's character and personality.

The underlying purpose of this article is to focus attention on character study in songs which is very important for successful communication of the essence of Bharata Natya. (It is a measure of the intrinsic worth of this illuminating article that it is as relevant today as it was years ago when first published in this Journal —Ed.)



Who shall stand guard to the Guards themselves ?

— Juvenal,

Perhaps in time the so-called Dark Ages will be thought of as including our own.

—George Lichtenberg.

Grace is the outward expression of the inner harmony.

—William Hazlitt.

Vidvan Sri T. Viswanathan

The Music Academy's choice of Sri T. Viswanathan to preside over its 62nd annual conference to be held in December this year has been welcomed by discerning lovers of music who know his family background and his own distinction as a musician, teacher and scholar. Born in 1926 in Madras, Viswa, as he is known to his intimate friends, was groomed in Karnatic music by eminent musicians in his own family: Vina Dhanammal, his grandmother, Jayammal, his mother and Balasaraswati, his sister. He later specialized in flute as a disciple of the maestro, Tiruppambaram N. Swaminatha Pillai.

Academically, Viswanathan holds a Master's degree in Economics and a Doctorate in Ethnomusicology, Wesleyan University, U. S. He has an enviable record as a teacher, having shaped scholar-musicians like Jon Higgins. His academic activities include participation in symposia and seminars and original research in the field of music. A recipient of grants and stipends from Foundations like Fulbright, Smith-Mundt and Rockefeller, and Senior Fellowship from the American Institute of Indian Studies, Viswanathan has played a significant role in popularizing Karnatic music abroad, particularly at Wesleyan university in the United States where he lives and works. He received the Sangeet Natak Akademi's Award for 1987 for his eminence in music and his contribution to its enrichment as Karnatic instrumentalist (flute).

Viswanathan has a vast repertoire of rare compositions and is also an excellent vocalist. He lives up to his rich inheritance shunning anything too loud or dramatic. He guards the Dhanammal tradition and padanthara of songs zealously. Everything about his music has an intellectual slant and subdued emotional overtones, through subtle, expressive phrasings that point to sophisticated excellence in aesthetic intake. Viswa's repertoire includes some rare pieces, handed down by his great grandmother Kamakshi (disciple of Subbaraya Sastry) which the clan preserves like the arcana of a secret religion. Viswa as an artist prefers clarity of presentation in ragavistara to elaborate displays of difficulty and complexity. Like his forbears, he conveys the impression of being a patient student still in search of the absolute in Karnatak music. The Music Academy is to be congratulated on their choice.

KSM

My Russian Experience

By

SHOBA NATARAJAN *

My first contact with the Russian people was in October '83 when I danced for a visiting Soviet delegation from Georgia. I was pleasantly surprised by their genuine appreciation and quite thrilled when they invited me to perform in Soviet Russia in March '84. I toured the State of Georgia giving Kuchipudi performances in cities like Tbilisi, Gori, Telavi and Rustavi. There was a great deal of understanding and appreciation for Indian dance. The people were warm and friendly and eager to know more about Indian customs and traditions.

While I cherished warm memories of my visit, little did I think I would get another opportunity to visit the Soviet Union again. Hence it was a great honour for me to be asked to perform during the Festival of India in Russia. My party left India in mid-July on a six-week tour. We were received by our Russian interpreter and taken to Hotel Russia which I think is one of the biggest hotels in the world.

We reached Leningrad the next morning and were put up at Hotel Leningrad. There were Indian faces everywhere and the colourful costumes worn by the Folk troupes caught everybody's attention. The Peter and Paul Fortress was the venue for an exotic Folk festival. I gave a couple of performances in Leningrad and one of them was in the impressive Rubinstein Hall along with the well known veena player Mysore Doreswamy Iyengar. There were many leading singers and dancers from South India and we shared our pickles and curry powders with them. Our mridangist was in great demand —what for do you think?— as he had a fresh stock of "pan" leaves from Madras.

Our hosts had taken great pains to see that Indian food was served and wherever we went we had no problems about food. Later we went on a tour of Ukraine and Moldavia. These States are in the southern part of Russia where the weather was warm and sunny. Our programmes found appreciative audiences and many of them cam-

* Shoba is the daughter of Mr & Mrs. T. V. Natarajan, well versed in Bharat Natyam & Kuchipudi styles. Mr. Chinnasathyam included her in her tour of the States. It was a triumph for the young artist. Nearer home, she has given many Bharata Natya recitals the most recent one being on the occasion of the inauguration of T. V. Second Channel of Madras before an audience that included the Minister for I & B and the top brass of Doordarshan. Shoba has a beautiful voice with which she renders songs featuring in Bharat Natyam with conspicuous charm. Young and very handsome, her stage presence is an asset to her.

to me at the end of the programme asking a lot of questions. The little Russian which I had learnt before I left India was extremely useful in communicating with these people.

Interest in Mythology

Though they are not very familiar with Indian Dance, they seem to know quite a lot about our Mythology. Songs based on Gods like Krishna and Shiva were quite popular. Our Padams and Javalis which depict the love theme were also fancied. They were fascinated by the depiction of the 'Navarasas'. These basic emotions are common to the entire human race and people all over the world react in the same way to similar situations apparently.

One welcome feature was that even small children attended the programmes and made it a point to rush up to the stage with flowers and gifts after every item.

I have many wonderful memories of the beautiful cities we visited. We travelled mostly by the Aeroflot. Our travel arrangements were in the efficient hands of our troupe manager. Once or twice we also travelled by trains which were as clean and comfortable as the planes.

Art Museums

As soon as we arrived in a new city we were taken on a guided tour and the things which impressed me the most were the huge war monuments and the museums with their extensive collection of paintings. We

also saw some exhibitions of agricultural produce and folk arts and crafts. The Russians still preserve, with great care, the beautiful churches and palaces which were built many centuries ago. In Leningrad, we had the good fortune to visit the summer palace of Peter the Great. The landscaped gardens with innumerable fountains adorned with golden statues, left a lasting impression on our minds.

Each state has its own national costume and wherever we went to a new place we were received by a bevy of beautiful girls dressed in their national costume and with the customary offering of bread and salt. After one of my programmes, the head of the local organising committee presented me with a traditional costume.

Russian circus is world famous. We had several opportunities to witness some incredible shows.

Similar tunes

While listening to the Russian language we came across many words which sounded like Sanskrit. Their folk music is also similar to some of our tunes. That is perhaps why they liked our dances and music so much.

Russia is indeed a great country and its people are very warmhearted and friendly. I recall so many instances of their spontaneous affection. The pleasant memories will linger in my mind for a long, long time.

LONG LIVE INDO-SOVIET
DRUZBA E MIR!

Khungroo Dance Festival at Bhopal

USTAD ALLAUDIN KHAN SANGEETH ACADEMY, Bhopal, has been organising KHUNGROO - a three-day annual dance festival at the Bharat Bhavan, Bhopal. Young and promising artistes of different styles are invited to participate in this festival which is now quite popular. This year's festival was held from 1st to 3rd September '88 at the ANTHARANGA auditorium and attracted a good number of rasikas.

A Bharatha Natyam recital of Kumari SUJATHA SRINIVASAN of Madras marked the inauguration of this festival. Exquisite lighting and pleasing acoustics are the hallmarks of this special auditorium where an intimate atmosphere is established between the artiste and the audience by their close proximity to each other. This instant rapport benefits both.

Sujatha Srinivasan opened her concert auspiciously with the composition ANANDĀ NARDHANA GANAPATHIM in Nattai by Oothukkadu Venkatasubbier, creating an atmosphere congenial for the vibrant padha varnam of Maharaja Swati Tirunal SUMĀSAYAKA in Kapi that followed. The dancer's deep involvement in abhinaya and grip over the thala came out very well in the sanchari bhavas and nritta sequences. The heroine's longing for union with her Lord Padmanabha was well portrayed in her subtle abhinaya. Similarly, in the Khandita nayika padham ARI-VENAYYA (Atana) which figured later in the 100-minute programme, the element

of sarcasm was well brought out. Anticipation, desire, disappointment and sorrow—all these emotions found suitable expression in the Tamil padham THERUVIL VARANO (Khamas).

However, the most appealing and highly applauded piece was the popular Dasar padham KRISHNA NEE BEGANE (Yaman Kalyan), interpreted with all the flavour of mime and music. The Thillana in Mohana Kalyani of the violin maestro Lalgudi Sri Jayaraman came as a fitting climax to a performance that beautifully combined sparkling nritta, bewitching poses and intricate theermanams, besides moving abhinaya.

For the young dancer who last year won the first-ever award instituted by the Music Academy, Madras for a "Young and Talented Danseuse", the programme added another feather to her shining cap. Udupi Sri Lakshminarayan ably conducted the recital with vigour and clarity. Smt. Gowri captivated the audience with her delightful rendering of the compositions. Sri Balachander (Mridangam) and Sri Siva Ganesan (Violin) cooperated well to make the programme a success. Shri Ashok Vajpeyi, I.A.S., Secretary, Madhya Pradesh Kala Parishad and other dignitaries graced the function with their presence. The Dy. Director Mr. Om Prakash Chourasiya, who was in charge of the arrangements for the festival proved a very efficient organiser.

P. S. Subramanian

A Colourful Celebration

Bombay

Inaugural session of the Silver Jubilee Celebration comprised a 3-day Karnatak music programme of varying magnitude K. V. Narayanaswamy's vocal (Aug 22), Lalgudi Jayaraman-son violin duet (Aug. 23), and Mani Krishnaswamy's vocal (Aug. 24). It was a happy coincidence, as the Sabha chief pointed out, that while the Hall's inauguration concert was by that doyen Ariyakudi Ramanuja Iyengar, its Silver Jubilee celebrations took off with the concert of his prime chela, Sri K. V. Narayanaswamy.

September had a visual treat of dances from Shobha Naidu (Kuchipudi on Sep. 9), Hema Malini (Bharata Natyam (Sep. 10) and Sanjukta Panigrahi (Odissi-Sep-11). Hindustani music dominates the October session, the star attractions being the Santoor Samrat Pt. Shivkumar Sharma (Oct. 7) and melodist Begum Parween Sultana with her husband Ustad Dilshad Khan (Oct. 9), interspersed with Radha-Raja Reddy's Kuchipudi (Oct. 8). Besides, members could regale themselves with nostalgic memories going through "Sabha Down Memory Lane" in a photo feature to be on show during the concert days.

Amidst crackers and gay Diwali rejoicings. November will be marked by hectic activities—a 6-day drama festival apart from the monthly concerts, plus 2-day symposium on classical music with veteran musicologists and musicians participating. It would be a feast of music-dance-drama by Bombay celebrities during December with the students of the Sabha Sangeetha

Vidyalaya presenting ensemble and solo-recitals. With Mangala Isai of Nagaswaram, the New Year would be ushered in followed by the mellifluous music of M. L. Vasanthakumari and enchanting Venuganam of K. S. Gopalakrishnan.

KVN'S Soft sheen

Back to the inaugural music sessions, KVN, it needs no reiteration, has enriched the Bani his master initiated with a graceful vilambakala rendition lending the sahitya an evocative depth. The concert comprised kritis in quick succession balanced with a poised delineation of Kalyani and Kambhoji and highlighted by "Needucharana Pankajamula" and "Sri Subramanyaya Namaste" respectively. The niraval swara phases had his typical stamp which Chandrasekharan enhanced in his own way on the violin. Vellore Ramabhadran gave mighty support to the concert.

The Lalgudi father-son violin duet got off with a solemn Saama Varnam. Subtle evocation of bhava, sweet-toned enunciation of kritis which is the hallmark of Lalgudi with finely blended technique highlighting niraval-swaras elevated the quality of the recital. Jewels like "Raghuveera Rana-dheera" (Huseni), "Seethapate" (Khamas, and "Mohana Rama" (Mohanam) among the repertoire embellished it. Krishnan was equally on top, treading his father's line with originality. Ramabhadran was in his melodious mettle softly permuting his

rhythmic strokes alongside the stringed melody.

A reverence for Paataanthara and a dedication to Sampradaya—that was Mani Krishnaswamy's vocal. Kharaharapriya might have been the only Raga that featured in an elaborate alapana. Nevertheless, the recital comprised quite a number of kritis which gave proof of her vidwat and vivaharam. V. V. Ravi (Violin) and Kandaswamy (Mirdangam) played with understanding.

"If old is gold, new is exciting", wrote a conferee once. With all that electronic marvels like blender and synthesiser, one more instrument of 'background music' has marched forward joining the bandwagon of classical solos. Casiotone, an electronic organ with a keyboard and capable of producing music of Jalatarangam, flute, piano, Shahnai, trumpet etc., proved its mettle when Coimbatore Venkataramana Rao played a solo for the Sabha in June. No doubt it had the novelty attraction. It

is to be seen if it would sustain in the classical concert field.

It was after quite some gap the clarinet maestro A. K. C. Natarajaa was featured by the the Sabha in a solo and he lived up to his reputation that he is the uncrowned monarch of this instrument. Kambhoji, Kalyani, Shanmukhapriya flowed freely from a controlled blowing technique he adopted evoking poignance and giving the renditions a meaningful interpretation.

Of the other artistes mention must be made of the budding musician S. Jayashree who has linked her crisp creativity to the art of concertcraft. Blessed with a fine voice, steady on sruti, the young vocalist sang with aplomb in a Concert at Mini. The other noteworthy feature in the Mini was the Sitar Ensemble by Vidyalaya Sitar students. The strength of the 11-member team was the tonal synchrony and the harmonious way they played the Gats (note-based) in Khamaj, Bhoop, Malkauns.

S. R.

HEARTY CONGRATULATIONS

To

Vina Vidvan R. Pichumani

Violin Vidvan Chalakudy Narayanaswamy

&

Vidvan Nookal Satyanarayana

Being Recipients of the SANGITA NATAK AKADEMY'S
Awards For 1988

முத்துத்தாண்ட வரும் தமிழிசையும்

இயல், இசை, நாடகம் என்ற மூப் பெரும் கலைகள் தமிழ் மொழிக்கே உரியது. சிறந்த நடையோடு கூடி, இலக்கணம் அமைந்த தமிழ் இயலாகும். பண், தாளம், மொழிப்பாட்டு ஆகிய மூன்றும் வேறுபடாமல் அமைந்திருப்பது இசைத் தமிழ். ஒரு கதையோ அல்லது ஒரு கருத்தையோ அடிப்படையாகக் கொண்டு அரங்கின் மீது நடிகர்கள், வசனம், உரையாடல், இசை, ஒப்பனை ஆகியவற்றின் துணைகொண்டு நடப்பது நாடகமாகும். இதர உபகலைகள் இம் மூன்றினுள் அடங்கும்.

கலைகளில் தலையாயது இசைக்கலை. இசையில் இன்பம் இயல்பாகவே அமைந்துள்ளது. இசையானது தன்னைச் சார்ந்த உயிர்களைத் தன் பால் இசைவிக்கும். அதாவது தன்னை வயப்படுத்திக் கொள்ளும் ஆற்றல் பெற்றது. இசைக் கலையானது உணர்வின் உறைவிடம். இன்பத்தின் நிறைவிடம். இறைமையின் மறைவிடம் எனலாம்.

இசை உலகம் மிகப்பெரிது. இறைவன் இசைவடிவானவன், சப்தஸ்வர ஓங்காரத்திலிருந்து பிறந்தது இசைக்கலை. இயற்கை அறிவோடு மனத்தை இசை விருப்பத்தில் “இசை” எனப்பெயர் பெற்றது. இங்கிதத் தினின்று எழுந்தது சங்கீதம் என்பர். இசைக்கு ஏற்றவாறு இனிய ஓசையுடன் அமைக்கும் பாடலுக்கு சாகித்தியம் என்று பெயர் இறைவனையும் வயப்படுத்தும் தன்மையுடையது. இசைப்பாடல்கள். இராவணன் தன் சாமகானத்தினால் சிவபெருமானை வயப்படுத்தி எண்ணற்ற வரங்கள் பெற்றதாக புராணம் கூறுகின்றது. இசைப் பாடலுக்கு உருகாதார் உலகில் எங்கும்

இருப்பதரிது. இசையினால் பயிர்களும் வளம் பெறுகின்றன என்பது ஆய்வு மூலம் கண்டறிந்த உண்மையாகும். பிறவி லேயே உடனாகப்பிறப்பது இசையாகும். செயற்கையாக ஒருவர் சிரமப்பட்டு பாடலாம். ஆனால் அதற்கு செவி சாய்க்க இயலுமோ? இயற்கையில் அமைந்த இசை இன்பத்திற்கு உலகில் ஈடு இணையே காண்பதரிது.

இசையினை நாத வடிவம் என நவிலுவர். சுத்த சைதன்ய நிலையைச் சுட்டிக் காட்டுவது. விரிந்தோடும் மனத்தை ஒரு நிலைப்படுத்தி, பேரானந்தப் பெருநீட்டை கூடி நிற்பவர்கள், மறந்து விழித்தெழும் பொழுது, மறுபடியும் அவர்களை அந் நிலைக்கு கொண்டு சேர்ப்பது, அசையாத திறம் படைத்த இசையே யாகும். பக்தியை வளர்ப்பது. சகல சித்திகளையும் நல்க வல்லது. இகபர சுகத்தை ஈவது இசை மனக் கவலையை மாற்ற வல்லது. உயிரை உறுதிப்படுத்துவது வசிய சக்தி வாய்ந்தது. தெய்வீகத் தன்மையுடையது. இயற்கை வடிவானது. இன்ப நிறைவானது. இதை கருத்திற்கொண்டு தான் ஒரு ஆங்கில அறிஞன் “Music is bliss and divine. man and nature are alike susceptible to its Overmastering influence” என்று பகர்ந்தானோ என்னவோ.

இசை மரபுக் கேற்றவண்ணம் சுருதி, ஸ்வரம், வண்ணத்தினால் ஆகியது சங்கீதம் என்றும், எழுத்து, சொல், பொருள், யாப்பு, அணி என்பதனால் ஆகியது சங்கீதம் சார்ந்த சாகித்தியம் என்றும் மதிவாணன் வெண்பா பகலும்.

திருஞான சம்பந்தர் இன்னிசைபாடி எறும்பைப் பெண்ணுருவாக எழுப்பித்

தந்தார். வைணவ பக்தி சிரோமணி களும் இசை பாடித் திருமாலை வயப்படுத்தினர். பாட்டுக்கு ஆசைப்பட்டு சுந்தரருக்கு தூது சென்றான் பரமன். மறைக்காட்டில், திருக்கதவம் திறந்து வைத்தது. மருள் நீக்கியாரின் இருள் நீக்கியது இசை சம்பந்தர் நற்றமிழ் இசைப்பாடிப் பொற்றாளம் பெற்றார். அப்பருக்குக் கட்டுச் சோறு கட்டிக்கொடுத்துப் பஞ்சத்தை நீக்கிப் படிக்காசு கொடுத்தது இசைப் பாடல் ‘பாடும் பணியே பணியாய் அருள்வாய்’ என்று கிளியுருவில் கேட்டார் அருணகிரிநாதர். “பாடும் பணியில் படைத்தருள்வாய்” என்றார். குமர குருபரர். தேவாரம், திருவாய்மொழி, திருவிசைப்பா, திருப்புகழ், திருவருட்பா, ஆகிய அனைத்தும் அருளிசை அமுதாய் அமையப் பெற்றதாகும்.

கர்நாடக இசையின் வாயிலாக, இறவாப் பாடல்கள் பாடி, இறையருள் பெற்றவர்கள் சங்கீத மும்மூர்த்திகளான சத்குரு தியாகராஜர், முத்துஸ்வாமி தீட்சிதர், சியாமா சாஸ்திரி ஆவர். தமிழிசை வாயிலாக சாகாவரம் பெற்ற பாடல்கள் பாடி இறையருள் பெற்றவர்கள் தமிழிசை மும்மூர்த்திகளான முத்துத்தாண்டவர், மாரிமுத்தாப்பிள்ளை கோபால கிருஷ்ண பாரதியார் ஆகியோராவர். முத்துத் தாண்டவர் தியாகராஜ காலத்திற்கு முற்பட்டவர். பதினேழாம் நூற்றாண்டின் முற்பகுதியைச் சார்ந்தவர் என்று வரலாறு கூறுகிறது. சோழவளநாடு சோறுடைத்து என்பது ஆன்றோர் கருத்து. முத்தமிழ் வளர்க்கும் சோழ வள நாட்டில் எண்ணற்ற திருத்தலங்கள் உள்ளன. திருஞான சம்பந்தர் அவதரித்த சீர்காழித் தலமும் அவற்றுள் ஒன்றாகும். அத்தலத்தில் அமைந்துள்ள சிவாலயத்தில் இசைக் கருவிகள் இயக்கித் தொண்டு புரியும் இசைவேளாளர் மரபில் தோன்றியவர் முத்துத் தாண்டவர் இளமையிலேயே இசைக்கலைப்பயின்று நன்கு தேர்ச்சி

பெற்று, தமது குல மரபுக்கிணங்க, ஆலயப் பணியை இசைப் பணியோடும் இறைப் பணியோடும் செய்து வரலானார். வருடங்கள் பல ஊர்ந்தன.

முற்பிறப்பில் செய்த தீவினையின் பயனால், இவர்கள்ம நோயினால் பீடிக்கப் பெற்று, நோய் முதிர்ந்து, நந்தோற்றமும் பொலிவும் மற்றும் உடல் திண்மையும் இழந்து, இறுதியில் தமது இறைப் பணியையும் இசைப்பணியையும் கைவிட நேரிட்டது. எனினும் நித்தமும் ஆலயம் சென்று இறைவனை வழிபடுவதில் சிறிதும் மாறாதவராக திகழ்ந்தார்.

அவ்வூரில் சிறந்த இன்னிசைக்கற்று, தமது இனிய குரலால் தினமும் சிவநாம திருப்பாடல்களைப்பாடி மகிழ்வித்து வந்த ஒரு கணிகையிடம் இவருக்கு நட்பும் தொடர்பும் ஏற்பட்டன. இதனால் இவர் உற்றுர் உறவினரை இழக்க நேரிட்டது. வறுமையின் பிடியில் சிக்கி மிகவும் பரிதவித்தார்.

பசிப்பிணி தாங்காது ஆலயம் சென்று, அம்மையப்பன் சேவடிப் போற்றிப் பணிந்து, அங்குள்ள வீடை முதலிய ஊர்திகள் வைத்திருக்கும் அறைக்குள், ஒருநாள் எவருக்கும் தெரியாமல் புகுந்து அயர்வினால் படுத்துறங்கி விட்டார். நள்ளிரவில் எழுவே, பசித் துன்பமும் உடற்பிணித் துன்பம் இவரைப் பெரிதும் வாட்டத்துவங்கின தூய பக்தியுடன் அம்மையப்பனை வேண்டி அழுது புலம்பினார். இவரது பக்திக்கு மனமிரங்கி உமாதேவி ஒரு சிறுமியாக வடிவந்தாங்கி அவருக்கு அருள் பாலித்து. அழுது வழங்கி, அவரதுப் பசிப் பிணியை நீக்கினார். தமது உடற்பிணிக்கு தக்க மருந்து அளித்து அருள் பாலிக்கும்படி உமையை வேண்டினார். அகில உலக நாயகியின் அருள் பெருக்கினால் அவரது அயர்ச்சி நீங்கி மன

தில் ஒரு பேரோளி தோன்றியது. உமை அன்னை அவரை நோக்கி “நீ தில்லைக்குச் சென்று கூத்தப்பெருமானை வணங்கி அவன் மீது நல்ல இன்னிசைப் பாடல் களைப் புனைந்து பயம் மற்றும் பக்தி உணர்வுடன் பாடினால், உன் நோய் முற்றிலும் மறைந்து நலமடைவாய் என்று மலர்ந்தருளினார். அதைக்கேட்டு ஆச்சரிய மடைந்து மனக்கிலேசத்துடன் உமையிடம் “நான் கல்லாதவன், பாடல்கள் புனையும் ஆற்றல் அற்றவன் என் செய்வேன்” என்று புலம்பினார். அதற்கு உமை அவரிடம் கூறினாள் “தில்லையில் கூத்த நாதரின் அருள் வேண்டி பக்தர்கள் வணங்குகின்ற நேரத்தில், அங்கு குழியுள்ள பக்தர்களின் கூட்டத்திலிருந்து எந்த சொல் முதன் முதலாக உன் செவியில் கேட்கிறதோ, அச்சொல்லையே முதலடியாகக்கொண்டு பாடு. இனிய இசைக் கவி பாடும் ஆற்றலை அப்பெருமானே உனக்கு அருள் செய்வார்” எனக் கூறி மறைந்தார்.

பொழுது புலர்ந்ததும், முத்துத் தாண்டவர் உமா தேவியின் கட்டளைக் கிணங்க, சிதம்பரம் சென்று சபேசன் கோயில் வந்தடைந்தார். சிவகங்கையில் நீராடி, வெண்ணிறணிந்து, அக்கமலை அணிந்து ஐந்தெழுத்து ஓதி, திருக்கூத்தன் முன் வீழ்ந்து. பன் முறை வணங்கி கண்ணீர் மல்ல நின்றார். அன்பர்களின் கூட்டத்தில் “பூலோக கையாடகிரி சிதம் எனும் தொடர் மொழி அவரது செவியில் கேட்டது. அத் தொடரையே முதலடியாக வைத்து சிவகாம நாதன் திருவருளால் “பூலோக கையாடகிரி சிதம்பரம்லால் புவனத்தில் வேறு முண்டோ” என்ற இனியப் பாடல் முடிந்ததும், அன்பர்கள் அனைவரும் காணும் படியாக ஐந்து பொற்காசுகள், ஐந்தெழுத்துப் படியில் தோன்றின. இதனை நடராஜப் பெருமானின் திருவருட் குறிப்பென்று உணர்ந்த தாண்டவர் மகிழ்வுடன் அக்காசு

களைப் பெற்றுக்கொண்டார். கன்ம நோயும் நீங்கியது. அதன் பிறகு இறைவன் மீது பல பாடல்கள் புனைந்து பக்திப் பெருக்குடன் பாடலானார். இவரது பெருமையும் புகழும் மெதுவாக அக்கம் பக்கம் பரவத் தொடங்கியது. இறைவன் அளித்த வரத்தால் பல அற்புதங்களை நிகழ்த்தி, பெரும் புகழடைந்தார். இவரது வரலாறு நீண்ட தொரு சரித்திரமாகும்.

தமிழிசை பரவ செட்டி நாட்டரசர் குடும்பத்தினரும் தமிழிசைச் சங்கமும் கடந்த ஐம்பது ஆண்டுகளாக ஆற்றிவரும் பணி பாராட்டுக்குரியது. தமிழிசை இயக்கம் இல்லை யெனில் கர்நாடக இசை மேடைகளில் பாடப்படும் ஒருசில தமிழ் பாடல்களும் இடம் பெறாத நிலைமை எழுந்திருக்கும்.

“அருமருந்தொரு தனிமருந்து அம்பலத்தே கண்டேன்”, “கண்டபின் கண்குளிர்ந்தேன்”, “தரிசினம் செய்வேனே” போன்ற பல செந்தமிழ் இன்னிசைக் கீர்த்தனைகளைப்பாடி, தமக்குக் கிடைத்த அருட்சக்தியின் துணையால் மக்களுக்குப் பசிப்பிணி போக்குதல், நோய் நொடி நீக்குதல், விஷம் நீக்குதல் ஆகிய தொண்டுகளைப் புரிந்து உலகிற்கு உதவி செய்து பலகாலம் வாழ்ந்தார். பக்தி இன்னிசைத் தமிழ் கடலில் ஆடித்திளைத்த முத்துத் தாண்டவர் முக்தியடையும் பக்குவம் பெற்றுத் தில்லைக் கூத்தன் திருமுன் அணுகி அகங்குழைந்து “மாணிக்க வாசகர் பேறெனக்குத் தர வல்லாயோ அறியேன்” என்னும் சிறந்த கீர்த்தனைப் பாடலைப்பாடி ஆவணிப் பூச நன்னாளில் அக் கூத்தன்மீருந்து வெளிப்பட்டுத் தோன்றிய, காணக்கிடைக்காத திருவருட் பேரொளியில் இரண்டறக் கலந்து பேரின் பப் பெரு வாழ்வு எய்தி பிறவிப் பயனைப் பெற்றார்.

இவர் எண்ணற்ற கீர்த்தனைகள் புனைந்ததாக வரலாறு கூறுகிறது. எனினும் ஏட்டில் கிடைத்தவை அறுபது கீர்த்தனைகளே. இப் பாடல்களைத் தொகுத்து ஸ்வரதாளக் குறிப்புகளுடன் அண்ணாமலைப் பல்கலைக்கழகம் வெளியிட்டுள்ளது.

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BY

T. B. NARASIMHACHAR

The Shantala Arts Academy is an infant institution, the brainchild of that dashing young dancer, K. R. S. Prasanna, who hit the headlines a couple of years ago by performing a non-stop Bharathanatyam recital for 24 hours and created history. Inspired by the success of the first dance festival arranged last year, this Academy held a three-day dance festival at Vijayapura, about 50 kms. from Bangalore. As before he had the unstinted support of all the members of his family, under the leadership of his father, Raghusuta. Most of the participants were teenagers. It was a combined music-cum-dance festival. Young disciples of different dance schools participated. On the music side, both Hindusthani and Carnatic vocalists figured. Some of the very young dancers like Padmini Sireesh (11) and Indu (14) revealed rich potential, as did Lavanya Kamalesh (14) a Hindusthan vocalist disciple of Pandit Seshadri Gawai. Excellent team work ensured its success, as the residents of the surrounding areas were not much exposed to the classical media in these performing arts.

During the middle of August there were many programmes, availing the Independence day holidays. Sursagar, dedicated to Hindusthani music, held the Devnandan Ubhayakar Yuva Sangitotsava on two-days and sponsored all young artistes in two sessions each day. Such festivals have been enabling budding young artistes to seek the limelight and be noticed by discerning art lovers (Kal-ke-Kalakar scheme).

Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan

The Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Bangalore Kendra, has been very much in the forefront in sponsoring workshops and their success has been taken up by visiting artistes also. In the wake of the workshop conducted by Dr. Padma Subrahmanyam, the other popular and leading dancer from Madras, Smt. Chitra Visweswaran also conducted a workshop and the concluding function at the Chowdiah Memorial hall was a success. Most of the participants were established dancers who wanted the benefit of the seasoned experience of Chitra.

Music Workshops

In the past there have been workshops on various subjects like 'Padams', 'Javalis', etc., but it must be said to the credit of the Bharathiya Vidya Bhavan that it has taken up the holding of 'Workshops' on a regular monthly basis. During July, Smt. Vallabham Kalyanasundaram, sister of late Mayuram Viswanatha Sastri, a wellknown composer, conducted a workshop on some rare compositions of her brother. During August veteran, M. S. Selvapullai Iyengar—a senior alumnus of the Music college at Chidambaram and a protege of stalwarts like Tanjore Ponniah Pillay, Tiger Varadachari, Sathur Krishna Iyengar and others—conducted a workshop of 'Shakti Navavarana krithis' of Muthuswami Dikshitar. In a ten-day session he could teach only six krithis, in view of the intricate and difficult nature of teaching and learning these

ongs. The second session of the remaining songs is scheduled for the third week of September. The Bhavan, in collaboration with 'Gana Rasika Mandalli' arranged for the release of a book in English by Vidwan S. Rajagopala Iyer of Bangalore. It is a new approach to Tala Calculations to serve, in the words of Mridangam maestro Umayalpuram Sivaraman,—“as a ready-reckoner for students and others to have a good grasp of laya intricacies. The book is titled 'Sangita Akshara Hridaya'.

In recent years, Sri Raghavendraswami Aradhana celebrations provide for music concerts and the Sri Raghavendra Seva Samithi Swimming pool extension is very much in the forefront. It held a three day festival of some good, local artistes. Veteran mridangist of Bangalore and Principal of the Karnataka College of percussion T. A. S. Mani was felicitated by his students and admirers on the 6th of August on his return from foreign tour. Dr. V. Dore-swami Iyengar presided Dr. T. K. Murthi and Sri Lalgudi Jayaraman spoke in praise of Mani as a performer and teacher. The Department of Kannada and Culture of the Government of Karnataka held a Folk Art festival (Janapada Kala Mela) to cater to the tastes of Rural folk.

As usual, a specially formed committee had made elaborate arrangements for the holding of cultural programmes at eight different centres in Bangalore, providing for lot of variety by way of folk dances and music, light music, dramas, patriotic songs, dance, etc., all at the cost of the Tax-payers. Balamurali Gana Ravali Bangalore chapter, got up a function to celebrate its eighth year. In this connection it also presented addresses of felicitation to

vidwan C. Honnappa Bhagavathar, and Sri T. B. Narasimhachar, Music and dance critic. Dr. M. Balamuralikrishna, who was present on the occasion personally paid tributes to the two recipients. There were two short vocal recitals by Mohana Krishna (blind) of Vijayawada and Channakesava of Bangalore—two young disciple of Dr. Balamurali. The Directorate of Festival of India presented a programme of Baibatov-song and dance theatre at the Chowdiah memorial hall. It was an object lesson in the application of discipline and perfect coordination in the field of the performing arts.

It is a noteworthy event that the Maharajapuram Viswanatha Iyer Trust of Madras sponsored a benefit Fund programme by Maharajapuram Santanam assisted by Nagai Muralidharan on violin and Vellore Ramabhadran on mridangam, in aid of the building fund of the 40-years old Malleswaram Sangita Sabha of Bangalore. It was a gesture very much appreciated by people here. As usual his concert attracted a very large audience and held them in thrall.

On the 9th of September, the 83 year old Bangalore Gayana Samaja took the lead in arranging a public felicitation function in honour of Dr. Semmangudi Srinivasa Iyer, the doyen of Carnatic music and a father figure to all young aspirants—on his 81st birthday. While many local institutions and individual admirers of the maestro joined in the felicitation function Mr. T. T. Vasu, President, Music Academy, Madras and Maharajapuram Santhanam joined Dr. V. Dore-swami Iyengar, in paying unstinted tributes to the unique contribution of the veteran for over 60 years to the progress of Carnatic music as a performer and as a teacher.

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